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THE RENAISSANCE

By EDITH SICHEL

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THE RENAISSANCE

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BY

EDITH SICHEL

AUTHOR OF "CATHERINE DE MEDICI," "MEN AND WOMEN OF THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE," ETC.

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THE RENAISSANCE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

MICHAEL ANGELO'S great painting of the newly created Adam on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel might be taken as a symbol of the Renaissance, of the time when man was, as it were, re-created more glorious than before, with a body naked and unashamed, and a strong arm, unimpaired by fasting, outstretched towards life and light. Definitions are generally misleading, and it is easier to represent the Renaissance by a symbol than to define it. It was a movement, a revival of man's powers, a reawakening of the consciousness of himself and of the universe—a movement which spread over Western Europe, and may be said to have lasted over two centuries. It was between 1400 and 1600 that it held full sway. Like

other movements it had forerunners, but, unlike other movements, it was circumscribed by no particular aim, and the fertilizing wave which passed over Italy, Germany, France, England and, in a much fainter degree, over Spain, to leave a fresh world behind it, seems more like a phenomenon of nature than a current of history—rather an atmosphere surrounding men than a distinct course before them. The new birth was the result of a universal impulse, and that impulse was preceded by something like a revelation, a revelation of intellect and of the possibilities in man. And like the Christian revelation in the spiritual world, so the Renaissance in the natural, meant a temper of mind, a fresh vision, a source of thoughts and works, rather than shaped results. When it crystallized into an æsthetic ritual, it fell into decadence and corruption.

But before that happened, its real task had been accomplished—a complex task, in which certain elements stand out. Two main things there were which the Renaissance of Western Europe signified: it signified Emancipation and Expression. The Renaissance is a loose term which has served to cover

many issues—the Revival of Learning, the regeneration of art, the revolt against the Schoolmen, the expansion of men's thought with the expansion of the world beyond the seas. And it has been ascribed to many external causes greater and less. The death of feudalism had given free play to the individual and had weakened authority. The famous taking of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, which put an end to the Greek Empire, had sent Greek scholars wandering over the world and shipped west into Italy a glorious cargo of looted manuscripts and sculptures. The discovery of printing, with the consequent circulation of books and of thought, produced a change that was immeasurable; while the discovery of America and the obvious effect that it produced upon trade profoundly modified the laws of wealth and the possibilities of transit. But all these outward events were only visible signs of a great motive power that grew from within; of the reassertion of Nature, and of her rights, against asceticism; of the disinterested desire for knowledge for its own sake—not the Schoolman's desire for logical results, or that of the alchemist who regarded science as a

means to find the philosopher's stone, but for something far wider. Rabelais' giant baby, Prince Gargantua, born in the open air, in the midst of a festival, waking to life parched with thirst and calling loudly for drink, must have been a conscious symbol of the child of the Renaissance, who came forth into the world unswaddled, and athirst, to drink deep and grow strong enough for the overturning of false barriers, and the reinstatement of those senses which religion had taught him to contemn. Beauty was manifested to man afresh—beauty and joy which he had learnt to regard as the deadly foes of Christianity. And, inspired by newfound marbles and manuscripts, in a kind of intoxication, he once more embraced Paganism and Nature, and acknowledged man's body to be the exponent, not the adversary, of his soul.

Here there comes in the second great element of the Renaissance — Expression. Expression implies a consciousness of that which is expressed. In the Middle Ages expression in words or stone or painting was naïf, a matter of narrative and of symbols, prescribed mostly by tradition. If personal

force pierced through, it was accidental—when men of exceptional gifts happened to be employed. But as people became more conscious of themselves and the world, and began to want to define their relations towards it, and when they finally reawakened to a sense of beauty, emotion was kindled and expression sought and found. There arose, first in Italy, then in other lands, a perfect passion for language. The fuel was ready, the re-discovery of the classics set it alight. The unearthing of manuscripts in remote and forgotten monasteries, the publication of the works of Virgil and Seneca, Plato and Aristotle, with a score of other ancient authors, acted upon men's imaginations. Scholarship in those days was no set science; it involved risk, it unfolded unknown vistas. Like all else, like science itself, it was bathed in an atmosphere of poetry. Men approached new-found manuscripts with excitement and reverence.

When Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) discovered an ungarbled text of Quintilian's *Institutions*, there was an almost religious exaltation; while the great Lorenzo Valla (1406–1457) urged the claims of Latin with

the zeal of a propagandist. Scholars and students unknown to one another corresponded all the world over, formed friendships, compared texts, communicated fresh niceties of erudition. The Scaligers in Verona, the Estiennes in France, the pre-eminent Erasmus of the Netherlands, the rest of that wonderful band of men who tried to apply learning to life and went by the name of Humanists, revealed and increased a hundredfold the powers and possibilities of language. And in doing so they performed a work more important for the nations than scholarship. They increased vocabulary, and with it the national mind. Few words mean few ideas, and vocabulary is a fairly safe index of a country's intellectual outlook. Literature is, foremost, a sweetening and civilizing influence. But, unconsciously, it has a further power, not deeper, but more far-reaching—the faculty to propagate words and widen the horizon. This is what happened in the early Renaissance; presently scholarship ceased to be emotional, it became prosaic, and then it grew formal. Words fresh from the mint were over-used and, turning against themselves, finally hardened

into shibboleths or eupheuisms. Humanists gave place to pedants. But the words introduced by scholars quickly filtered into common speech; the vulgar tongue was enriched; and the spirit of research went outside the classics, revising old folk-songs, forming schools of popular poets. The *Stornelli* and *Rispetti* (songs of the country-side, many of which are still existent), the *Ballate* (dance-songs), the sacred songs, or *Laude*, and such-like traditional verse, served as a ready means for the ripening of the Italian mother-tongue and the rehabilitation of homely themes. And in France Fables, and Romances of chivalry did much in the same fashion to keep the French language alive. The exclusive employment of Latin in the world of letters had been the link between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The growth of national speech and its gradual encroachment upon Latin as a literary medium was the link with modern times. In later days this growth, by these means, formed such natural poets in Italy as Lorenzo de' Medici, Poliziano and Pulci, or as Villon and Marot in France. Literature became what it was meant to be, the property of the people.

Language, however, is but one part of expression, and art was, perhaps, the most potent and enduring means of self-revelation chosen by the Renaissance. In painting, in sculpture, in chiselled gems and goldsmiths' work, that wonderful period flowered and seeded, as fertile as if it were a second Nature with its own laws and seasons, until expression degenerated into over-expression and art grew decadent and died of surfeit.

This emancipation, this power of expression, were manifest in every direction. Men's minds were in love—there was not a dry place throughout the realm of knowledge. If the investigation of language was poetic, the study of grammar was a high adventure and the science of the Law became romantic. For it was now that the false Decretals—those so-called Sybilline Leaves upon which the theologians had based the legal system—were proved to be forgeries and that many found in Roman Law the supreme word of wisdom, while the complex relations of war and commerce produced the need and the rudimentary outlines of a law between the nations. The work of such a great legal initiator as the Frenchman, Cujas (1522–1590), gives life to dry bones. The

enthusiasm for Oriental learning, meanwhile, produced a great band of Orientalists, pundits in Sanscrit or Hebrew, scholars of the Talmud or the Koran, who thus indirectly stimulated thought and modified men's views of Church teaching; while, on the physical side, the discovery of the Western world—the voyages of Columbus (1492) and Sebastian Cabot (1497, 1499, 1526), of Vasco da Gama to India by the Cape of Good Hope (1497–1498), and of Vespucci over the Atlantic (1499), with the later expeditions of Drake and Hawkins—enlarged men's horizons, widened their national sympathies, enriched their purses. Physical science, which can hardly exist till thought has advanced far enough to provide it with a starting-point, was the last branch of knowledge to develop. It was not the least. The upheaval produced by Copernicus when (1507) he proclaimed that the earth was not the centre of the universe, but only one of many planets revolving round the sun, was perhaps the greatest blow that intellect dealt to orthodoxy—an assault followed up by Galileo (1564–1642) and his famous *Pur si muove.* Harvey's discovery, rather later, of the circulation of the blood, and the

rise in the sixteenth century of such a school of doctors and surgeons as that of Kop and Paré, put an end to the universal prevalence of empirical methods in medicine. All these men, setting out in small vessels on the high seas of knowledge, were as much explorers as any Drake or Hawkins who sailed, big with hope, for El Dorado.

But the Renaissance could never have been the true Renaissance, the spread of knowledge among the many, had not this intellectual enthusiasm arisen at the same time as a means of diffusing it. It almost seems, indeed, as if the enthusiasm itself produced the invention of printing, as a strong current forces a passage. In a day when the dissemination of literature depended on copyists of manuscripts, even though there were hundreds of them, ideas were bound to remain in the possession of the few. The printing press of Gutenberg—the inventor of the art—in partnership with Fust or Faustus, set up in Mayence (1450); that of William Caxton in London (1474); the great Aldine Press in Venice (1494), which first published books under folio size—in itself an inestimable service—and the House of Plantin in Antwerp

(1549), began a new era for the world. Whoever has been over the House of Plantin, with its simple Renaissance front, its spacious rooms—a perfect hostelry for learning—its garnered memories of furred and black-robed scholars and printing-presses ever at work, and gold-tooled brown leather folios, has gained some notion of the patient knowledge, the fine taste and criticism which went to make the printers of those days; and whoever has seen or read descriptions of the Aldine editions of the Greek classics will realize that Aldus Manutius was a genius. They will understand how great was his contribution to knowledge at a time when he had often no more than a single manuscript, badly defaced, from which to reconstruct his version; when, in any case, a choice of readings of these garbled documents meant an act of daring; when the very fact of publication meant a lifelong devotion. The printing of books in those days was in itself expression, perfect in each part, from the text and paper to the binding—a noble art which ranked with the highest. And it was the same when, as speedily happened, books grew cheaper and more numerous, when the

Aldine press sold them at what amounted to a shilling or half-crown in our currency. Printing remained the source of irrigation which fertilized the world of intelligence.

It is always an interesting question whether men produce movements or movements men. The answers may be equally true. Every great movement is heralded by forerunners, each following each, each often influenced by each, till the single figures mass into groups first, later into throngs, and what was exceptional is universal. Men make movements, and then it would seem that the movement, once created, makes the men. For with the general need there spring up the people to fulfil it, one, magnet-like, drawing others.

The Renaissance had many forerunners, growing, indeed, so frequent between 1300 and 1400 that some historians prefer to date its rise earlier by a century than we have done. But even long before that there were prophetic messages. There were, to begin with, all the heretics: the Breton Abélard (1079–1142), the foe of the Schoolmen; and their other enemy, the Arabian, Averroes (1120–1198), who tried to restore the true text of Aristotle, so

mutilated by theologians; and his great patron, Frederick II, the arch-heretic, the friend of heretics and of artists, who initiated a brief and premature Renaissance at his court in Sicily. After his day the names come more quickly, first in literature and the arts, and afterwards in thought. The *Divina Commedia* of Dante (1265–1321) revealed behind its mediæval theology the mind of an individual cut after no pattern; and in that colossal work and in the *Vita Nuova* he built up the national language—always the first step towards emancipation. Cimabue (1240–*c.* 1302) and Giotto (1266 or 1276–1336) in painting, and Niccolo Pisano in sculpture, no less than Dante, burst the bonds of tradition and replaced monastic symbolism by Nature. They were followed throughout the fourteenth century by an unbroken dynasty—by Orcagna, and Simone Memmi, and Spinello Aretino, and by Niccolo's successor, Giovanni Pisano; while the Van Eycks' great picture, "The Adoration of the Lamb," was begun before 1400. In thought, St. Francis (1182–1226) wandered as wide as Wycliffe (1324–1384) from the beaten track, each, in his way, obeying natural instinct; and later the

Franciscan friar and born freethinker, Roger Bacon (1214–1292), turning his mind to physical science, made discoveries several centuries too early and was imprisoned by Franciscan monks for having done so. Literature was a safer field, and literature did not lie fallow after Dante.

He was succeeded by Petrarch (1304–1374) and Boccaccio (1313–1375), two complete men of the Renaissance before their time: Petrarch, almost the first collector, and the loving student of Latin manuscripts, the Christian who adored the pagan thinkers, who said he stood between Augustine and Virgil (the fragmentary Virgil of those days, for no complete Virgil saw light till 1469); Boccaccio, the frank child of beauty and the senses, whose starry meadows and green-robed, myrtle-wreathed ladies foreshadow the painters to come; whose vivid, marvellous prose continued the work of Dante and helped to mould the mother-tongue.

"What life dost thou live?" says Petrarch in his Imaginary Letter to Virgil, ". . . how near the truth were thy earthly dreams and imaginings? Hast thou been welcomed by the wandering Æneas, and hast thou passed

by the ivory portal? . . . Or, rather, dost thou dwell in that quiet region of heaven which receives the blessed, where the stars shine benignly upon the peaceful shades of the famous? Wert thou received thither after the conquest of the Stygian abodes—on the arrival of that Highest King who, victorious in the great struggle, crossed the unholy threshold with pierced feet, and, irresistible, beat down the unyielding bars of hell with His pierced hands, and hurled its gates from their . . . hinges."

In this passage the Renaissance was born —with its passionate feeling for the past, its determination to reconcile the old gods with Christianity.

And while Petrarch was writing thus, Chaucer (1328–1400) was singing in England, running tilt against asceticism and hypocrisy, striking blows for the "trouthe" that "shal delivere"; and Langland was giving us *Piers Plowman*, with its cry for sincerity and equality.

After the dawn came the day. Its first glory passed quickly, its noon and evening brought about unexpected results. The Renaissance began with an almost fanatical

revival of classical learning; it ended in anti-classicism and the triumph of the Romantic Movement. It opened with Poggio and Lorenzo Valla, it closed with Shakespeare. For while it was worshipping antique forms, it bore within itself a new life which was pushing towards birth; it involved paradoxes of which it was unconscious. The embracing of Paganism meant the reassertion of Nature; the reawakening of art and learning, a revived sense of beauty and enjoyment. And enjoyment, which is vitality, can bear no bonds; it is spontaneous, it must make its own laws and live. It must live in the present, not in the past. By 1600, the world was on the side of Shakespeare.

Every nation played its part in the Renaissance, but Italy came first of all. Italy was the well-spring from which the other countries drew life. That life was the enduring fruit of conquest which the French invaders, Charles VIII, Louis XII, Francis I, carried back to France between 1494 and 1515. Germany and England caught the same inspiration from the same source. And in each land, shaped by its own qualities, the Renaissance took a particular form. Rabelais

tells how, when the seekers after the Temple of Bacbuc at last reached the shrine and entered, the wine that the priestess gave them, though it came from the same fountain, tasted different in the mouth of every man. So it was with the subtle wine of the Renaissance.

In Italy the movement was practically over by 1500. In the other countries, where 1450 still found it in its infancy, it did not prevail till the end of the century, nor did it die till 1600. In France and in England, indeed, its full life was not lived till 1540 and onwards. But, whatever its dates, its fall was much the same everywhere. It killed itself. The weak element of the movement, for long kept under by its force, was emotionalism; and as its force declined there was nothing to counterbalance this weakness, which degenerated into pedantic sentimentality. The Renaissance had a sense of beauty, a conviction of man's power, of his dignity; it had no conscience, no rudder to steer by. And yet it has bequeathed to us a noble heritage. Before it ended, what was enduring in it had already passed into common existence—its championship of Nature, its rehabilitation of joy in life.

In Autumn, when all seems most mortal, the dying leaves make the mould from which the flowers will grow the next Spring; and in the decay of the Renaissance was hidden the secret of the future—the rich seed of modern thought.

CHAPTER II

THE MEDICI IN FLORENCE
1434–1492

I. The Renaissance in Florence

It was not only in different countries that the Renaissance took different forms. In Italy every great town or province had in a measure its own Renaissance. Romans, Tuscans, Umbrians, Venetians, Sienese, the Schools of Naples, Mantua, Ferrara, could each show an art distinct from the rest. Rome was, as behoved the capital of the West, the meeting point of all the arts; it collected, it excavated, it criticized; possessing no creative gift of its own, it developed the Renaissance of the amateur; Florence, divided between intellect and religion, linking them together through beauty, sublimated the senses and, at once natural and ideal, gave us Giotto, Donatello, Botticelli; Umbria, in a varying form, fulfilled much the same purpose,

with something more of intellect; Mantua and Ferrara were still more elaborately intellectual; Venice and Naples were pagan, splendid, of the earth; Siena was purely mystic, symbolic, almost consciously archaic. What, amid all this variety, was the bond which made the many Renaissances of all the states and towns and nations into one? There was obviously the search after beauty, but there was a far deeper quest of which this was but the part: there was the search after unity—the central truth of all these movements and one which made their best days what they were.

The great men of the prime of the Renaissance were reconcilers. They sought for knowledge as if it were the philosopher's stone, but solely on condition that thought should be made one with Christianity. Petrarch's position between Augustine and Virgil only heralded that of Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499) who spent a great part of his life in harmonizing Christ and Plato—and these strivers were types of all cultivated people. "Much noted for the sanctity of his life and for being learned in Greek and Latin" is a phrase which, in the biography of the day, served as a

common passport to reputation. Saints and pagan gods, the Virgin and Aphrodite, were placed indiscriminately together; Cato and David were put into the same rank in heaven. Law, science, medicine, mathematics, each man thought he could master them all, and that all religions, all branches of knowledge, were one. This vision even affected conquerors and their lust of possession. The French King, Francis I, dreamed of universal Empire, and of joining East and West. Men saw that intellect which led you where it would was the natural enemy of the pale Galilean; they desired neither of the two to conquer; they wanted reconciliation, not victory, and they set to work to discover the link between hostile forces. That link they found, or thought they found, in beauty.

Had this ideal been practicable, the Reformation, as a new religion, a cause of insuperable division between reason and authority, need, perhaps, never have existed. Luther and his comrades, proclaiming as they did the rights of natural instinct, were quite in the spirit of the Revival, and it seems as if at one moment the Renaissance and the Reformation might have gone hand

in hand. But the passion for classicism then reigning had to be reckoned with. It was a pagan passion, irreconcilable either with a spiritual outlook or with strong religious conviction. And the great blunder of the new movement was to plant this classicism—the most polished and sophisticated art—in a soil where it could not grow, the soil of raw and truculent Nature reasserting long sequestered rights. The good in one and the other was unable to make common cause, and withered; like found like, and primeval licence fusing with the licence of satiety ended in a corrupt materialism, a materialism so wholly inimical to the interests of religion that any alliance between the two was impossible. Luther with his direct vision saw as much, and made for conquest not for peace. But had this not been so, who knows if Erasmus might not have won the day?

Florence from 1400 till the last decade of the century may be taken as the central hearth of this faith in unity, in the ultimate harmony of clashing elements—Cosimo de' Medici and his grandson, Lorenzo (1449–1492), as representatives of this ideal. After that reigned Savonarola, a living protest

against it, an iconoclast with regard to all that it involved; and the shattered fragments were never pieced together again. When Cosimo, the sumptuous banker, defeated the Albizzi and, after two years of exile, came into power and became the popular head of a Republic (1434), the new movement was still at the spring. The Medici were true princely democrats, born organizers, born patrons, not too common a combination. Cosimo suited the world he lived in, and that world, in so far as art was concerned, was one in which new vistas were always opening. The young art was, indeed, rapidly growing towards maturity; the old and highly perfected art of Byzantine tradition was played out. Its once living emblems were becoming formulæ, ill-suited to current needs. Duccio di Buoninsegna (1285–1320) was the last representative of their majesty. When Giotto and Niccolo Pisano reasserted in painting and in sculpture the truth of Nature as against the truth of convention — the claims of men and things as they were, as against the claim of symbols; when they and their followers, Memmi and Orcagna and Spinello, with the uncle, Andrea, and the

greater nephew, Giovanni Pisano, had the instinct to leave the known forms, the genius to try to see for the first time, they still unconsciously kept some traces of Byzantine style.

A certain stiffness in their work, a generalizing quality, came to some degree from inevitable technical difficulties; but as much, or more, these were the involuntary heritage from the past. By 1400, however, such archaisms had practically disappeared. With miraculous rapidity the new art sprang up almost full-grown. Masaccio, who died, a fully ripened master, at twenty-seven, had painted on the walls of the Carmine Chapel scenes from Genesis and the Life of St. Peter, as rich in modelling as in power of dramatic narrative. He had but followed in the footsteps of his master and colleague Masolino (1383–1440 ?) and of Paolo Uccello (1397–1476), whose green frescoes of Noah's adventures in the cloisters of Sta. Maria Novella show his genius for grafting serene classical form upon the live reality of Florentine life; while his potent battle-pieces, the first of their kind, with horses rearing beneath jewelled trappings and gleaming condottieri, solve problems of perspective

and foreshortening hitherto unattempted. And, secluded in the Monastery of San Marco, Fra Angelico (1387–1455) was trying to bring heaven to earth, and technique into heaven, with colours that were as clear as his inspiration.

In sculpture, meanwhile, Donatello had made the same revelation. Putting behind him the tangle of mediæval tradition, its mingled naïveté and subtlety, its dogma, its mythology, Donatello (1386–1466) went straight with his mighty chisel to original sources—to youth and manhood, and the love of living, above all, to the life of children—and gave us a world of marble and bronze at once real and ideal; or, rather, showed us the ideal in the real, alive with the very breath of creation. More than any man, perhaps, since the days of Greece, has he contrived to render movement and to stamp it with a final tranquillity: whether tragic movement, as in his Crucifixions and Depositions, or the dance, as in his Cantoria, where his children, their robes blown and tossed by some vital energy from within, leap and circle and chase one another like waves on a summer morning. His ally and disciple,

Michelozzo (1391–1472), was, with a style and genius all his own, making for the same ends; and nearer still to Donatello was Luca della Robbia (1399–1482), whose marbles and terra-cottas showed a grace and majesty later rather hidden by the attractions of his coloured glazing. In architecture, too, Michelozzo and the famous Brunelleschi (1379–1440), the designer of the Dome of the Cathedral, initiated the new development in architecture, the free application of the antique to modern uses, the formation of a native style; and their mantle fell upon Alberti (1405–1472), who went on beyond them. While in the sculpture of reliefs, Ghiberti (1378–1455), the author of the two great Baptistery doors and of the font in the Duomo at Siena, worked magic in bronze and gold and silver.

It was small wonder that art was so vital. It was fed in Florence by every common sight in the streets, by every civic custom and institution, first and foremost by those of the Guilds; and, in its turn, it gave back with interest what it received. The Guilds stood for more than picturesqueness. Each, under the protection of its patron saint,

acted not only as a trade-union, but as a corporation for conduct. They associated commerce and religion and supported the treaty by laws so stringent that we wonder how any apprentice submitted to them. Artists and sculptors were only craftsmen like any others, and the standard of work was so high that the distinction between skilled and unskilled workmen would have scandalized them. If a wool-stapler or a butcher gave his customers the smallest fraction of underweight, if artists used inferior material, or wood that would warp, the penalties were inevitable. No Mosaic Dispensation could be severer. But the Florentine Dispensation was as merry as it was strict. There were festas on every saint's-day, there were dances and masques and snowball-battles; each Guild had its own pageants, and there was a natural equality between masters and men that fostered a real living gaiety linking each to all, so that pleasure was a bond, instead of a division, between the classes.

Giotto's Campanile, Giovanni Pisano's Fountain, were a kind of sculptured primer of ethics in which Florence and Perugia wrote lessons for their citizens; the medallions

of the Virtues, of the Seasons with all their occupations, and of the Arts and Sciences; of Grammar, no mere dry-nurse, but a mother with her child at her knee, and of Philosophy pouring his wisdom into the ears of eager boys, were visible to every loiterer in the public places—part of the life of the people, of that wonderful general intelligence which then so permeated the air that it is difficult to say whether it was cause or effect.

In spite of all our books and pictures, it is not easy to rebuild the Florence of 1435–1440. The Medici lived in the Riccardi Palace; the Palazzo Vecchio designed by Arnolfo Cambio (1232–1300) which they afterwards inhabited was, and continued till 1532 to be, the seat of the Signoria; the Bargello was that of the chief Magistrate, or Podestà. The Duomo, its white marble rather too dazzling, perhaps, against its black stripes, was only consecrated in 1436; Ghiberti's doors, all glorious without, had been partly set up by 1424, though the last was not fully ready for another eight-and-twenty years. San Lorenzo, planned by Brunelleschi, the nearest church to the palace of the Medici, had been built by 1425. The rough stronghold

of Sta. Croce, begun almost a century and a half back by Cambio, was still unfinished; and Sta. Maria Novella, completed inside since 1350, yet lacked the resplendent upper façade added later by the hand of Alberti. Or San Michele—the handiwork of Orcagna—with its granary above the church, stood, as it stands at present, and held within it the wonder of the age—that great sculptor's marble shrine, carved with the story of the Virgin and with the Virgin's attendant guard of Virtues, Apostles, Saints and Angels. And across the way, then as now, rose the Arte della Lana, the Woolstaplers' Hall, with its stone emblem of a fleecy lamb above the doorway. Close by, too, the chaffering Mercato was held in the wide Piazza, now the Square of Vittore Emmanuele and the pride of a blatant civilization. In those days it was the centre of the life of Florence. All round it were huddled and piled—leaning, squinting, swarming, jutting out into the street—booths and gables, balconies and windows, *bottegas* and houses, the poorer sort hung with flowers, or bright rags drying in the sun, the better, with blazoned or carved devices. At one end was the famous cook-

shop, still standing within the last fifty years, where all the painters and craftsmen went to get their dinner. There Squarcione, goldsmith and painter, one day to be Verocchio's master, stood side by side with Filippo Lippi and talked of the skill of Fra Angelico's young pupil, the lad, Benozzo Gozzoli; while Rossellino and Andrea della Robbia discussed with gesticulating thumbs the merits of marble and terra-cotta, and Andrea's last effect in glazing. His uncle, Luca, could not leave his Cantoria — his wide-browed singing maidens, and his boys with pipes and tabors—the pendant work to that of Donatello for the Duomo, the pendant and the rival. Who knew if he, Luca, might not even excel him, though he *was* the greatest master in the world? And in their midst stood the artist who regarded himself as the greatest of all, the famous cook, their host, ladling out to each his portion of *minestra* steaming from the pot. All was shifting colour and movement and noise—purposeful noise and movement—nor did the din flag unless it were when a street singer, perhaps the popular "Rhyming Barber," Burchiello, came in acclaimed by a nickname, in striped

jerkin and breeches, his cithern slung round his neck, and sang some of the Tuscan *Beone*, the drinking-songs; or else city songs, or May-day songs, or the age-old *Ballate*, the dance-measures of the country-side set to trenchant stories in rhyme. Everyone, cook and all, would join the chorus; some, after their stoup of good red wine, would dance, and there were jokes and there were kisses—for the flower-girls came in from the Campagna with fresh roses and sweet herbs for the mouth; and then, as the great bell boomed the hour, back to work through the blue and golden blaze of the square, with zest and no repining, for love-making was but an episode, and work was the background of life, interwoven with every part of it.

Meanwhile you might meet the great Cosimo, *Pater Patriæ*, crossing the sallow waters of the Arno by the crowded Ponte Vecchio, on foot most likely, homely and magnificent, in golden tissue and violet; his jewelled chain with its pendant medal, designed by Pisanello, round his neck, a pearl from the East in his cap, his hand laid on the shoulder of his companion, the Greek philosopher, Agyropulos, his retinue behind him. Now

and again he stops to look at some bauble, perhaps to buy it, on the booths along the bridge, and to put a pertinent question to the craftsman who sells it; or to converse with the *contadini* who have carried in their flat fruit-laden baskets from the country, and to find out all he can of their manner of sowing and planting. But artists he loves better than gardeners, and sculptors best, he owns, among artists. He is now on his way to the *Bottega* of Donatello, his "*molto amico*," to watch the progress of the bronze doors that he commissioned him to make for the Sacristy of San Lorenzo. Nothing is too good for this his favourite artist. The Bank of the Medici has been ordered to give him a weekly sum that will suffice for him and for four underlings. And "because this Donatello did not go clad as the said Cosimo would have wished, he gave him a rose-coloured cloak and a hood, and another garment below the cloak, and thus he thought to clothe him anew from top to toe. And one feast-day morning he sent these clothes to him that he might wear them." Donatello appeared in them once or twice, but after that "he would no longer put them on, for that, said he, they seemed

too delicate in his eyes." If Cosimo desired strenuous men to have luxury, he knew how to refuse it to those who were not. When a certain Fra Roberto from Milan, once a frugal and pious friar, but spoilt by the great Duke, Francesco Sforza, came to visit him in Florence in a robe of rich Flemish cloth, Cosimo begged him to sit down by his side and took it between finger and thumb. "Is not this very rich?" said he. "Duke Francesco gave it me," answered the friar. "I did not ask you who gave it you—I asked if it were not very rich," said Cosimo again. There was silence. The court looked on from a distance. Then Roberto whispered in his ear a petition for two hundred ducats. Cosimo had never yet denied any of his requests, but now he whispered back a refusal, and at the same time his sorrow for the change that caused his reply. "And all of this he told with such courteous consideration that no man present could hear it."

Gracious, shrewd and merry was Cosimo, simple of heart and manners and high of soul, with a fervent taste for discussion. What he enjoyed was talking of Immortality with men wiser than himself, more particularly

with Agyropulos. "He made more deeds than he made words. . . . His answers were short and sometimes dark, so that men might take them in divers senses. And he had an everlasting memory. Also he knew men at once when he looked into their eyes." So writes his intimate, Vespasiano. If he was as cruel as his compeers—and he could be terribly cruel—he was generous even in a generous age and as great a forgiver as an avenger. He gave without limits, and with delicacy. Scholars, holy men, needy envoys, were alike bidden to draw as they willed upon his Bank. And, unlike most potentates, he respected independence and scorned the convenient current fashion of rewarding service by posts about his court. He preferred to give houses or freehold farms. No less had he the art of the higher generosity. Pettiness was far from him. "There is," he used to say, "a weed the which grows in many places. Men," quoth he, "should not nurture it but let it wither up, yet the most give it careful fostering . . . and the weed is that most evil plant called envy." Envy, indeed, bred gloom, and gloom was his bugbear. Grumblers, men with grievances, he regarded

as his foes. He kept his most "salted" retorts (and his talk is recorded as always salted, even when he pardoned) for rich men who groaned over their possessions and other like croakers. One such he practically banished, bidding him go and live at his country estate, since his absence from it had, he gathered, caused the outrages so tediously complained of. Yet outrages against himself, if they were not conspiracies, he could pass by; he would dismiss a cheat, a thief, with a shrewd joke, whatever the sum of which he had been defrauded, but then the man whom Cosimo dismissed was not likely to be employed by any other.

A nature like his implied a big intellect. He was a keen reader of history and philosophy, he loved the sport of debate, and he always took the side of the weakest, whatever his own opinion. And then suddenly he would throw thought aside and go off to garden at his spacious Villa of Careggi.

Such was Cosimo, a type of early Renaissance manners and morals—of regal commonsense, of simple piety and simple cruelty, of splendour and of soberness. His conscience was a Renaissance conscience, at once in-

delicate and scrupulous. When Pope Eugenius IV was in Florence (1430) Cosimo confessed to him that a sum of ill-gotten money was weighing upon his mind and asked how he could best repair his offence. Eugenius lost no time in recommending him to rebuild the Monastery of San Marco, then insufficient for the needs of the monks. Cosimo obeyed; he maintained them there; and—finest gift of all—he gave to the monastery the library which afterwards grew so famous. It became his hobby. For this he bought priceless manuscripts and consulted bibliophiles and scholars.

Florence was indeed at this moment the centre of great men of learning. There were others who worked in Venice, Rome and Naples, notably Guarino of Verona, the famous classical teacher at Venice and Ferrara; but the majority preferred the patronage of Cosimo. They abounded in the first half of the fifteenth century, like an army of engineers, cutting the way over ice and snow for the Renaissance to pass over. But they began, as we have seen, in Petrarch's day, and increased towards the close of the fourteenth century. Such men as the Greek

grammarian, Chrysoloras, who lectured at Florence from 1397–1400, and his compatriot, Aurispa, the seeker after manuscripts, who first found texts of Sophocles and Æschylus, or the noble patron-connoisseur, Niccolo de Nicoli (*d.* 1437) to whom Aurispa brought his treasure-trove, were but the advance-guard. Cosimo beheld the prime of the Humanists, those disseminators of knowledge and enlightenment, the real exterminators of the Middle Ages. Only few among the many can be mentioned, whether of the intrepid band who searched monastic libraries for manuscripts at home and abroad, or of those who toiled in their studies. There was Poggio Bracciolini who did both, carrying off precious loot from Switzerland and Germany, and writing—and quarrelling—in copious Latin. Greater than he was Lorenzo Valla, the high-priest of Latinity, who maintained the rights of Latin as a literary language adapted to all purposes; the critic of words and ideas, who dared subject the Apostles' Creed to the test of historical knowledge. Or there was Leonardo Bruni who translated into Latin a considerable part of Aristotle and Plato; or Filelfo, fresh from his visit to

Constantinople and one of the first Professors of Greek at the University of Florence. And there was the influential circle of the Greeks themselves—Lascaris, the Lecturer, and Agyropulos, and Gemistos Plethon, the Mystic, to whom in great measure Florence owed the Platonic Academy.

His presence in the city was the result of the Council of 1438, originally convened at Ferrara and transferred a year later to Florence, and this Council, in organizing which Cosimo had been largely instrumental, was one of the most representative events of his reign.

For it made conspicuously for unity, summoned as it was for the purpose of reconciling the Eastern and Western Churches, Greeks and Armenians, with Rome. Whatever the political ends it had in view, and they were obvious, it also aimed at tolerance and harmony, at a vision of the truth men held in common rather than of the badges that divided them. In its picturesqueness, too, it was essentially of the Renaissance—a gathering of the nations and the Doctors of all colours and complexions. It met in Sta. Maria Novella. Pope Eugenius IV and the

Patriarch of Constantinople sat throned side by side, the Pope, great of mind and stature, so noble in aspect, says a witness, that it made the crowd weep to look on him; both of them surrounded by a throng of Greek Doctors robed in ancient vestments "full of gravity," in strong contrast to the gold and white and scarlet of the hierarchies of Rome. This parliament of prelates came to nought as far as its main purpose was concerned. East and West separated once more; but the aspiration to unite had been there and had put itself into the atmosphere, and, what was practically more important, a group of learned Greeks remained behind to spread fresh zeal for their language and their literature.

From this root sprang an ever-spreading enthusiasm for Plato and for a wider knowledge of his writings. The Platonic philosophy, so nearly akin to poetry, was a medium admirably suited to the work of reconciliation between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Aiming as it does at weaving all things that show good into one indivisible tissue, it easily became a pliable instrument for the latest doctrines, and a great deal was read into it that was not

originally put there. The Church laid no ban upon Plato. Hence it did not seem incongruous that the pious parish priest, Marsilio Ficino, should keep a lamp always burning before his bust, and give him as passionate a love as any living disciple to a living master. He devoted his life to what had hitherto been unattempted, a complete translation of his works. And in this his main motive was not scholarship, but an ardent desire to prove the agreement of Plato's teaching with that of Christ. If it was at Gemistos Plethon's instigation, it was also largely owing to Ficino's influence that Cosimo founded the Academe. This society met in the Badia (a church built by himself) to discuss points raised by the Neo-Platonic creed, and here they liked to talk from noon till evening upon love and the soul, or the commonwealth, as the case might be.

For Plato's ideals doubtless penetrated politics as well as thought, and affected the intellectual democracy which distinguished the administration of Florence.

Cosimo tried to make the science of Government one with art as well as thought. On the walls of Courts of Justice and of Council-

rooms he sought to immortalize the virtues, the abstract sentiments which should guide the State. He was not original in this, as the frescoed figures of Good and Bad Government in Siena's Palazzo Publico can testify. But he was keen to express political truths in terms of beauty, and to turn public buildings into lesson-books for the people.

His death was in itself an example of the unity he sought; it was one with his life. Some time before his last illness he seemed to have a presentiment that the end was approaching, and his wife noticed that he would often "stand motionless for hours . . . wrapt in thought." Once she asked him the reason. "When thou art about to go to thy country villa," said he, "it taketh a full fortnight of worries to order thy going. And I who have to depart from this life and travel to that other, dost thou not think that I, too, must consider?" He made his preparations in the fashion of his time, seeking help not in books of devotion, but in Aristotle's *Ethics* and in Plato. When he lay dying, he asked Ficino to read out his new translation of Plato. Marsilio sat at his bedside now reading, now talking of the

"Only Good," the same beyond Life as it is here. So, having "considered" his departure, he set out on his last voyage in great calm.

The field, however, in which the quest for Unity had freest scope was the field of a more regular education. Never, perhaps, were ampler opportunities given for wide culture. Mature students were provided with lectures—on Plato, on Dante, on the ancient languages: lectures at which earnest, grey-bearded learners sat side by side on a bench with striplings. But it is the schemes for the bringing-up of children which best prove the real enthusiasm for breadth and many-sidedness, for the use of numerous paths converging in one centre.

France in the eighteenth century could not produce so many or such various schemes of education as did Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth. Now, as then, an initiator of genius gave life to all these projects, whether those of contemporaries or of followers. The Rousseau of the Renaissance was Vittorino Raimboldini, better known as Vittorino da Feltre (1378–1446), the inspirer of educationists throughout the nations—to some

degree of Rousseau himself, since whether or not Jean Jacques had read Vittorino, that great Italian had revealed the value of simplicity, and the mischief worked by luxury in the training of the young. Rousseau had but to re-discover an idea of which the world had already been made conscious. And as Rousseau gave rise to the schools of Genlis and Edgeworth and Pestalozzi, so did Vittorino begin a line of innovators in ethics and in scholarship—from his famous disciples, Federigo of Urbino and Lorenzo Valla, to Erasmus and Colet and Rabelais in the age that came after. Vittorino himself could only have belonged to the earlier and purer half of the fifteenth century.

"Short he was of person," says one of his contemporaries, "small and very gay, of such a nature that it seemed he was always laughing, yet to see him you would say he was a man of great reverence. He spoke little and went clad in a robe of dark stuff with tails reaching down to the ground, and on his head a little peaked hood."

This laughing man was a strenuous student. In his poverty-stricken youth he worked his way at the University of Padua by taking

pupils; he even became footman to the professor of mathematics in the hope that his service might be accepted instead of the payment of his fees. He was disappointed. But he set to to master Euclid unaided and, more generous than the professor, he taught it for love. At forty-two, he went to Venice and learned Greek of the great Guarino, and at forty-four he formally started his system of education, first at Padua, then at Venice. Three years later, already a far-famed man, he, the hater of courts, reluctantly accepted the offer of Gian Francesco, Marquis of Mantua, to come there and educate his children. Thus it was that, supported by the enlightened Marquis and his intellectual wife, Paola Malatesta, Vittorino embarked upon his biggest, most enduring enterprise, and founded a kind of Utopian College, half learned, half Socratic, a union of Porch and Thebaïd. In a house set apart, he began the training of the princes and of a group of their friends and contemporaries. The undesirable and luxurious he weeded out, accepting none that were not spiritually suitable, however large the sums their parents offered; while such as were poor and promising he paid for

from the fees of the wealthy. Thus royal dukes were brought up side by side with plebeian scholars—their equals, perhaps their superiors, in this sincere Republic of letters. Nor did Vittorino exclude girls; he taught the two little Mantuan princesses, one of whom, Cecilia Gonzaga, was, at ten years old, a real Greek scholar. Over all alike the master exercised his sway. "The School-room," he told them, "must be to them a holy place," "and the house," says Vespasiano, "became a sanctuary both of deeds and words."

His system was pre-eminently stamped with the mark of the Renaissance; his chief quest was the search after unity, his main purpose to produce not a scholar but a man—a complete man, developed on all sides, in body and soul—self-subsisting, helpful, graceful, brave, deeply studious. His purpose was larger and more spontaneous than that of his illustrious French successor; he made for simplicity where Jean Jacques made for simplification; for naturalness rather than for any primitive return to Nature. And this Vittorino effected by plain and reasonable means—by frugal diet, hard exercise and sports—

of all kinds; by daily walks, by talks, by hours in his splendid library of manuscripts; by the constant use of intellectual stimulus and due attention to health in so far as it served to set the mind free; by a practice of steady piety, and the remembrance that God was best served by serving man. When the Gonzagas came to him they were spoilt and corrupted lordlings, accustomed to all the luxuries and despotisms of their condition. Ludovico was so fat he could hardly move, Carlo correspondingly thin. Vittorino diverted Ludovico from his habit of over-eating at table by starting topics of such interest, or music so attractive, as to make him drop the tit-bit from his fork; he provided Carlo with a nourishing diet. Ludovico turned out an excellent ruler and patron of art and learning; Carlo a gifted, scholarly human being. All his pupils gave him their confidence and could not bear his disapproval. When Carlo once used an oath at tennis Vittorino, seizing him by the hair, boxed his ears, and Carlo, far from resenting it, would not be consoled till he gained forgiveness. But the master liked praising better than blaming, and had been known to weep with

joy over a good composition. He knew, too, that humility can be dignified, and, naturally choleric, he bade his elder pupils interrupt him with a question if they saw him begin to lose his temper. He wished education to come from both sides and endeavoured to produce a true equality.

Lessons in Greek and Latin, in literature and history, began his course. Virgil, Homer, Cicero, Demosthenes were read and mastered in turn, followed by the pursuit of logic and dialectics, rhetoric and debate, mathematics and music. Throughout, his end was to kindle interest and to teach the way to think, to make his scholars citizens of an unseen commonwealth, to give them the freedom of the City of the Soul. He turned out what one who knew him called "men of life as well as letters," men like Federigo of Urbino, to whom art, science, war and statecraft were equally familiar, equally to be carried out on a plane of honour as high as their religion. But to effect this involved no common sacrifice; it meant a life's devotion, a cloistral power of self-control. Pisanello's medal in honour of Vittorino, stamped with the emblem of sacrifice—a pelican feeding her

young from her torn breast—was an image not far beyond the truth.

The character of Vittorino's best-known disciple serves better than any commentary to prove the results of his teaching. The aristocratic commonwealth of Urbino was as much his creation as that of the good Duke Federigo, whose shrewd face and broken aquiline nose are so well known to us through the portraits of Piero della Francesca and the medals of Pisanello.

Federigo, Count of Montefeltro, later Duke of Urbino (1422–1482), held as sumptuous a court as any in Italy. There Piero della Francesca painted, and thither from Flanders came Justus of Ghent, with his rich and sober brush, to portray Federigo's family. Here poets and ambassadors sat at the same board, and a troop of jewellers, mercers, inlayers, strove to adorn both board and company. Yet in spite of this magnificence, there was nothing soft about Federigo's establishment. The youth of Italy "flocked to Urbino to learn manners," and his household, which numbered five hundred, "was governed," says one of his friends, "less like a company of soldiers than a strict religious community."

There was no gaming, no swearing, there was merriment, there was untiring conversation. At meal-times, one of his five readers read aloud Livy, or Thomas Aquinas. The day was a long one; when the sun rose the Duke was on horseback, and was home from his morning ride just as his courtiers were getting up. After Mass, he held audience in a garden "open at all sides"—and the phrase sums up his mind and his policy. While he dined all the doors were open, so that any who liked might enter the crowded hall. He ate simply and drank nothing stronger than the juice of cherries or pomegranates. After dinner he officiated as Judge, and then, work over, he went to visit his favourite nuns of Sta. Chiara, or to watch the athletic sports of the young men of Urbino. The twilight brought diversion and discussion, by blazing fire, or in the starlit loggia, that loggia which from Urbino's towered crag looks down upon an ocean of blue valley. The talk often turned upon the arts that Federigo loved so truly—loved and understood, for "to hear him converse with a sculptor, you would have thought he was a master of the craft." There were hours also in his world-famed

library. Had it not taken fourteen years to create? It contained precious copies of every known Greek and Latin author, every Hebrew work that was accessible, every history and treatise of importance, the poets old and new, a wealth of volumes on the sciences and arts—each of them "writ with the pen, not one of them printed, which would be matter for shame"—a shining army of books bound alike, in crimson and silver. When we think that all this culture, all this beauty, existed in no rich Tuscan plain, but had to be transported up a mountain before it reached the city of the thirteen towers, we shall gain some notion of the force of those ideals which Vittorino da Feltre had inspired.

And there was in Italy another teacher, nearly thirty years younger than Vittorino, who shared many of his ideas, but transformed them into art, who formed, as it were, the link between the earlier Renaissance of Cosimo and the later Renaissance of Lorenzo—that full splendour of the noontide before the day began to wane. This was Leon Battista Alberti (1405–1472), architect, builder, painter musician, poet, scholar and mathematician;

student of physics, law, mechanics, astronomy, medicine; the famous writer on perspective, the creator of Sigismondo Malatesta's great Pagan temple at Rimini. Alberti's career began stormily; his family had been banished from Florence by the hostile Albizzi and he himself was born and bred in exile. Yet his writings, unlike those of most victims, show no trace of bitterness; their note is a philosophical suavity. His great work, the *Trattato della Famiglia* (the Treatise concerning the Family), written for the benefit of his own relations, is a kind of Tract for the Times, a manifesto of a morality for the State which is based upon family life. He composed it in the form of a dialogue held between several of the Albertis at Padua. The first book deals with education from babyhood onwards and with filial and parental relations; the second with marriage, and with the conduct of an ideal couple towards each other and towards the State; the third (after Xenophon) with domestic economy, moral and financial; the fourth with that favourite subject of the Renaissance, friendship: with the good to be gained from friends and the succour they give to the mind of man. Each topic, in turn, is

discussed with an all-embracing, concrete common-sense, and the four parts of the Manual make one whole; they unfold the ethical and physical evolution of man as a social being, from the unconscious days of primitive ties to the conscious days of spiritual choice. Once more there is the search after unity; after the solidarity of experience and of men in their diverse phases.

Alberti did more than write a noble moral guide-book. He developed, he defended his mother-tongue. A dead language, he averred, cannot suffice for a living nation, and reluctantly leaving the niceties of his cherished Latin, he used his native Tuscan and revived old Tuscan literature, thus aiding national growth and preparing the way for Lorenzo. He did it as only an artist could, and all this side of his multiform spirit is expressed in a letter that he wrote to Brunelleschi when, after Cosimo's return, Alberti also re-entered Florence.

"When," he writes, "I came back from the long exile in which the Alberti have grown old, to this our mother-city, which exceeds all others in the beauty of her monuments, I perceived that many living men,

but first of all you, Filippo, and our dearest friend, the sculptor Donatello, and Lorenzo Ghiberti and Luca della Robbia and Masaccio, were not of less account for genius and noble work than any ancient artist of great fame. . . . Who is there" (he breaks out) "so . . . envious as not to praise the architect Filippo, at the sight of that vast structure raised above the heavens, spacious enough to cover with its shadow all Tuscan folk? . . . This temple has in it both grace and majesty. I delight to notice the union of slender elegance with a full and solid vigour, showing, as it does, that while each part is made to please, the whole is built for eternity."

Then he enters the great nave and adores with all the fervour of one who has suffered absence and its longings. "Inside these aisles," he writes, "there is the climate of eternal Spring—wind, frost, rime without; a mild and quiet air within; the blaze of summer in the square; delicious coolness here. More than all things I delight in the sweetness of those voices busied at the Sacrifice. . . . Other modes of singing weary with reiteration; only religious music never

palls. . . . What human heart is so rude as not to soften at the rhythmic rise and fall of those voices, complete in tone, in cadences so sweet and flexible? During these mysteries, I can never listen to the Greek words calling upon God for His help against our wretchedness, without the tears falling from my eyes."

In Alberti's speech we hear the voice of the earlier Renaissance as it were confessing itself—knowledge and susceptibility are made one.

II. Lorenzo Il Magnifico

Both these powers reached their zenith in the day of Cosimo's grandson. As in the early fifteenth century knowledge flowered, and its blossom was called the Renaissance, so in its turn the Renaissance flowered, and its blossom was the soul of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Lorenzo inherited more than Cosimo's wealth. He carried on his traditions as a Patron, his reverence for scholars, his enthusiasm for artists. Il Magnifico read widely, he had no touch of the pedant. He

could be as simple as *Pater Patriæ*; he was also subtler, more poetic, more extravagant, as became his day.

For Lorenzo was born in due season. He was no contrast to his age, no exception. He was with his contemporaries, not beyond them—more themselves than they were. Original, but no originator, he took the gifts and powers that he found ready and adventured them on fresh paths till they wore a changed aspect.

The paths were many. Life, as we have seen, was never fuller or fresher than in the Florence of the Medici. Its art was the expression of its life, and Lorenzo, for so long the leading spirit in this vital, pulsing city, was, above all else, an artist, an interpreter of existence. In this he was not singular. There were many other artist princes of that day—Sforzas, Estes, Gonzagas, Malatestas; but no one else was an artist ruling over artists, freely chosen by them to be their ruler. And this could hardly have been but for the fact that the regal position of the Medici was theirs by no murderous usurpation or tyrannical tradition, such as prevailed in the rest of Italy, but simply by their fitness

for the post, proclaimed by the will of the people.

Lorenzo's boyhood had been passed in training for this end. Cosimo did not die till he was fourteen, and exercised some sway over his upbringing. But it was his father, the martyr to gout, Piero Il Gottoso, the enduring, uncomplaining, sweet-natured scholar, who planned his education. And it was his mother, Lucrezia Tornabuoni, who had the greatest influence upon him. "My only refuge, the only helper who could aid and counsel me," he said, after he had lost her. She must have been a delightful woman. She was loving, she was gay, she had wits and a marked turn for poetry. The mystic strain in her was strong—the strain she bequeathed to her son—and her verse took the form of "Spiritual Songs," sung in the streets of Florence by the people. Nevertheless, she was no puritan. She kept open house and open heart for the poets, the friends of her son and of her husband, and was indulgently kind even to the coarse-tongued Pulci, whose wit might easily have offended a taste less fastidious than hers. A quarrelsome set of people they were, and they looked to her

to soothe their ruffled feathers. But there was one of her dependents who gave her nothing but pleasure: the young painter, Sandro Botticelli. His spiritual imagination appealed to her. She took him to live in her palace and treated him almost as a son, and he, impressionable, unknown, gave this great lady something like adoration. The picture he painted for her, the Madonna of the Magnificat, now in the Uffizi, is full of personal feeling. There is a tender touch in the portraiture of the two boy-angels who hold the book—the idealized pictures, it is said, of the young Lorenzo and his brother, Giuliano, She probably left a lasting stamp upon Botticelli's art. She certainly did more to form her son's outlook than she knew. She helped to make him one of the two most distinguished Tuscan poets of his day.

Stricter educators were not wanting. There was Cristoforo Landino, the professor of poetry and eloquence at Florence, the famous writer and lecturer upon Dante (he was only rivalled by the fashionable Coello, whose course of lectures on the *Divina Commedia* filled the Duomo); there was Agyropulos; there was Marsilio Ficino, chosen by Piero

to teach his boy. And Marsilio was Lorenzo's Mentor all his life, for Marsilio represented Plato, and Plato did more even than his mother to mould his mind and his affections. He imbibed Platonism—Renaissance Platonism—with the air he breathed, and it is impossible to understand him and his times at all, unless we realize the part that it played in his life.

Platonism had a concrete embodiment in the far-famed Academe, which, since Cosimo's day, had widened in scope. Sometimes its Symposia were held in the chestnut glades of the Camaldulensan Convent of the Angeli, on the hills of the Casentino. Or you might see Lorenzo take the head of the board at the yearly feast, laid in some grassy palace garden, in honour of Plato's birthday. His brother, Giuliano Il Superbo, and Poliziano, the poet, would be there, besides Marsilio, and, in later years, Pico della Mirandola. Plato's bust presided at table, and each guest took the part of a character in his Dialogues, sustaining it all through the banquet. These grave and fantastic debates made a great stir in the world outside. Together with all the eagerness of undergraduates the

debaters possessed the maturity of men. Talk was their medium and they never tired of it. Landino, in his *Disputationes Camaldуenses*, has given us some idea of what they talked about. There was one particular day—it was in summer—when they gathered together by a "bubbling spring"—Lorenzo and Giuliano Il Superbo, and the great Alberti. To them came Marsilio with his lute, and ere long they began their discourse. The theme they chose was the relative merits of an active and a contemplative life. Alberti urged contemplation as the best means a ruler could have of doing good to his fellow-men; Lorenzo vehemently opposed him. The conversation glided on to other matters, to Virgil and the Platonic aspects of the *Æneid*. Platonism was a good starting-point for most subjects.

In what did this attractive creed consist? There was not much of the original Plato in it. Plato's tenets were poetical and elastic; besides, Florentine Platonism, as a code of conduct, was based upon the fanciful Neo-Platonists of Alexandria. Ficino himself had translated such Alexandrian works as the *Hermeticus* and the writings of Plotinus.

His method was to prove to his pupils "the relation between the unity and the plurality of Nature . . . between soul, intellect and matter"; his main end to bring men to live by the reality of the Idea, by the need to pursue it through all its earthly disguises; and his doctrine deliberately inculcated the scorn of the natural and the physical. Such were some of the conceptions which permeated the mind of Lorenzo and prompted his thought and daily conduct. His faith was one which warred against what was primitive—which made his intellect emotional and his passions cold.

This new religion was happy in having a great genius to embody it, and to lend it permanence. Botticelli (1446 or 1447–1500) was the highest expression of this intellectual fantasy. It was not only that he illustrated the Platonic passages in the poems of Poliziano —he interpreted Platonic visions. Love he turned into a subtle and enchanting ideal, an elaborate, ethereal form of poetry. The senses are there, but in solution, diffused by fastidious intellect. Where passion would have broken his perfect rhythm, he lifted passion to the plane of pure beauty and dispersed it.

Not that he is passionless. The intensity of his grey-robed Judith running along the red brick rampart; the fire and force of the wind-blown revel over starry lawns in his Primavera, are sufficient proof of that. But he aimed at balance and he generalized. As the greater Greeks generalized for the world and gave it everlasting types of strength and beauty, so Botticelli generalized for a certain highly refined public which came to life in the Renaissance; for the mystics of the intellect, whose mind and religion are so finely interwoven that they cannot be separated. Shelley is, perhaps, the spirit most akin to his in outlook —in the relation between soul and senses. It is a relation easier to apprehend in literature than in painting. But painting was the best medium for the Renaissance, and, as a painter, Botticelli endures as the fullest expression of his age: of its ideals, maybe also of its weakness. He embodies the Platonic Renaissance in the Florence of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

Botticelli, in great measure, interprets for us certain fashions of love that prevailed, and with them Lorenzo's attitude towards women, which was strongly affected by Platonism.

Love is a natural business, and Neo-Platonism is not. It despises the natural as the enemy of the soul. The professors of chivalry had long ago preached the worthlessness of all love excepting that which is born of the soul's choice. It was easy to graft the new Platonism upon such conceptions. Lorenzo's loves are the most charming and artificial of sentiments. He kept a kind of Platonic record of them, full of eupheuisms as delicate as those of Sir Philip Sidney; and it is here that he notes his four sonnets to Simonetta Cattaneo, the flame of his brother, Giuliano—the Venus of Botticelli's pictures, the lady of the rainbow scarf at Chantilly. She died young. The night after her death, he was walking in his garden and he saw a constellation he had never seen before. "Her soul," he said, "hath passed into the new star." His feeling was rather poetry than passion, and he soon avowed a longing for some fresh embodiment of his ideal. While still sad because of Simonetta, he went, against his will, to a wedding tournament. There he met a lady who gave him a wreath of violets. "Her beauty was wonderful . . . her hands were lovely beyond any

that Nature yet had fashioned, her wit fine . . . but without offence. . . . The dead lady had shone like a star . . . this lady was the rising sun." Her name was Lucrezia Donati, and he kept his half real, half philandering romance for her long after his happy marriage with Clarice Orsini.

Platonic influences also entered into the current ideals of friendship, which were lofty, intense, faithfully romantic. Lorenzo's friendships, like himself, are typical of his generation. He and his comrades, all equally one another's friends, formed a generous little circle, admiring one another for the best that was in them, each inciting each to high exploits of mind or deed. Marsilio Ficino, Poliziano and Pico della Mirandola were his closest companions. Marsilio, the Christian Humanist, we know; and Marsilio, the private man, was of one piece with the rest—beauty-loving, pensive, harmonious, giving much time to music as well as to philosophy, prone to melancholy, using his lute as well as his wisdom to dispel the moods that came over him. Poliziano, the poet, considered greater in his own day than any other, the critical editor of manuscripts, the tutor of Lorenzo's

children, the irritable man of letters who constantly fancied himself slighted, was, notwithstanding his foibles, essentially noble, and could sacrifice ease for the sake of knowledge. "Nature and youth," he once said, "drew me to Homer," and his translation of the *Iliad* (the second book) into Latin was completed before he was eighteen.

But Pico della Mirandola was the idol of the group and the youngest. Irresistible in grace, blest by birth and fortune, his golden hair falling round his sensitive face, he must have looked like that young man in the Louvre whom Raphael painted with such deep serenity in his eyes. The gods loved him and he died young; but not before he had achieved enough for a lifetime. He had all the accomplishments of the Renaissance phœnix. At twenty-one he already knew twenty-two languages; he was a fervent Platonist of the Ficino School; he was also a brilliant Orientalist, versed in Hebrew, Arabic, Chaldean. The East—"my East", he called it—exercised a strong spell over him. And in the Cabbala, after true Platonic fashion, he sought for unity with Christianity and found "the basis of all religion."

Phœnixes are not humble birds. At the same age of twenty-one Pico proposed to discuss nine hundred propositions before the Pope. Innocent VIII, perhaps unwilling to listen, condemned them, and only when Alexander Borgia wore the mitre did Rome forgive Pico. We can see him more easily in Florence than in Rome—where he did not arrive till 1480—sitting with his well-loved Marsilio, as they held long evening discussions with Jewish pundits on the inspiration of the Prophets.

Pico had power because he went to the end of his ideas. He was regarded "as a saint," says the Ferrarese ambassador. A fitting saint for a diplomatist's calendar, and one whose adventures were not always saintly. But it is remarkable—a proof that the Platonists of the Renaissance represented its real religious element—that Pico and Marsilio Ficino, the Platonist friends of Lorenzo, should, as well as Botticelli, have later gone over to the reforming friar, Savonarola: Pico with all the fire of his nature. He burned his love-poems, he decided to become a friar and to walk barefoot through the world. Death alone frustrated his resolve. And Savonarola

it was who also touched the religious chord in the dilettante Lorenzo, and, like some haunting power, divided him against himself, to his own discomfort, since he had not the strength to capitulate. In their search for unity these men found something deeper. "Thou hast conquered, oh pale Galilean," Lorenzo says in the person of Julian the Apostate, in a play that he wrote for his children. The words foretold the final failure of the intellectual ideals of the Renaissance.

Meanwhile there was no repining. Happiness, large-hearted and selfish, prevailed, and Plato suited the times because Plato had no trace of Puritanism. The man of the Renaissance needed joy and contrast. "We rode along singing," wrote Poliziano, as they journeyed one Lent from Florence to Pisa, "singing and sometimes talking theology, so as not to forget the season of fasting. Lorenzo was triumphant. At San Miniato, we tried to read some of St. Augustine, but the reading was soon exchanged for music and for polishing up the figure of a dancer, which we found there." Religious literature, literary religion, lute-playing, talk, delight in the antique—such was the Lent of the Renaissance.

If at one moment Lorenzo is sitting in the crowded Duomo, hearing Coello on Dante, at another he is watching the dance of myrtle-crowned boys and white-robed children in the Carnival, listening to his own drinking songs, or talking on equal terms with bluff old Niccolo Grosso, the ironsmith; or dispatching Lascaris to Mount Athos in search of manuscripts; or hawking alone among the hills amidst the crackling leaves of autumn and the sappy buds of Spring, which he knew so well how to describe simply in a day when other poets were elaborate; or appearing at the great Joust he gave in honour of Lucrezia Donati, a diamond in the centre of his shield, his scarf embroidered with pearls and roses, "*Le temps revient*" blazoned upon his standard—and *le temps* was the eternal Spring of the Idea.

The joy of this revelling had its brutal side. Sensibility and imagination were lavished upon the furnishing forth of life, and there was little to spare for humanity. At one Pageant, a generation later, a little boy who represented the Golden Age was so thickly painted with gold that he died. His death at all events served to point out the weakness

of the Golden Age itself. Practical kindness was not its strong point.

And yet, at any given moment, the responsive man of the Renaissance, the dealer in contrasts, might become anything. After a long day's hunt, or a banquet more Bacchic than Platonic, in the midst of his manuscripts and medals, Lorenzo would suddenly fall silent. The mystic mood that his friends knew well had come over him. And his mysticism proceeded neither from the æsthete's fastidious disgust of life, nor from a craving for novelty. It arose in a soul foiled by the senses and ever unsatisfied. "The beginning of the true life," he once wrote, "is the end of the life which is not true." This is the Lorenzo who felt the power of Savonarola.

Lorenzo's day is, as was said, the high-tide mark of the Renaissance. His reign saw art and learning at the point after which they were bound to decline, for all fullness contains in it the germs of decay. Unconsciously he and his contemporaries stood between two worlds—the past which ere long was to end, and a modern world of which that past contained the hidden seed. Lorenzo is one of the first people who possesses in his sayings,

letters, poems, that personal note, that sense of intimacy, which distinguishes our art, our correspondence, our manners, from those of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. And if he bears in him, as it were, the presentiment of a decadence to come, so does the art which expressed his time. The beginnings of such a decadence are enchanting. They may run counter to a great classical tradition, but they make a personal appeal. It is part of the spell of Leonardo, of Botticelli, of Piero di Cosimo, of Poliziano and of the sculptors—of Verocchio and Desiderio and Mino da Fiesole —that they are not simple. They are, on the contrary, subtle and secret and elaborate —intellectual, not primitive. Their types are non-natural, as are also those of their great contemporaries in Umbria and Padua, Piero della Francesca and Andrea Mantegna. They paint such people as the average man would call queer: the baffling eyes and lips of those who have grown old enough to press life for an answer to its riddle—who will never grow old enough to find it.

In literature, in the drama, the same subtlety is not observable. The drama, as elsewhere, was evolved from the Morality

Plays and from dramatized versions of the Legends of the Saints. But, in histrionic Italy, more speedily than in other countries, did they develop into full-fledged tragedies. And two poets at least would be hard to forget—Poliziano and Lorenzo de' Medici. The originality of both lay chiefly in the fact that they revived the vernacular; that they continued what Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, had begun, and sought to restore their language to its due dignity.

Even in his Latin poems Poliziano was an innovator, and imbued classical form with the spirit of the Renaissance. But his best work —his high fantastical verses, jewelled and embroidered like the pictures—his descriptions of the great ladies of Florence masked in tales of mythology—are in his native Tuscan, chief among them his *Stanze*, written to celebrate Giuliano's famous Tournament.

Lorenzo rivalled him in richness and in rhythm, whether in the *Selve d'Amore*, his poem in honour of Simonetta, or in his delicious lines of welcome to the month of May, or in his idyllic poems, the *Ambra* and the *Caccia*, with their fresh perception of sport and of nature.

Both of these poets owed much to that expressive Tuscan folk-song which ran the gamut from the broad and racy irony of the lyrics of street and country-side, to love ditties and spiritual *Laude*. They recognized that the true Italian genius lay here, and that when poetry left this high-road it too often became no more than a stilted imitation of the classics with no life of its own.

Apart from Poliziano and Lorenzo there are few writers' names worth remembering by any but the curious man of letters. Luigi Pulci, renowned in his day, revived romance in his epic of chivalrous adventure, *Morgante Maggiore*, a strange jumble of piety and ribaldry, of naïveté and cynicism. Boiardo (1434–1494) wrote *Orlando Innamorato*, the crude parent of Ariosto's later masterpiece. And there were, besides, two works, one in verse, one in prose, which considerably affected contemporary imagination, because, like our problem-novels, they touched on the questions in the air, rather than because of any intrinsic merit. That in prose was Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphyli*, or *Poliphil's Strife of Love in a Dream*, published in Italian by the Aldine Press

and dedicated, in 1467, to Guidobaldo of Urbino: a eupheuistic allegory of the progress and relations of the Senses, Freewill and Reason; of Love, in its different stages, from its crudest wakening to its arrival at the shrine of Venus, the source of life. The other book, written in *terza rima*, in the middle of the fifteenth century, is the *Citta di Vita*, by Matteo del Palmieri. Its central tenet, that the souls of men are the rebel angels of heaven, duly censured as heresy, took the fancy of Botticelli and inspired him to paint his Assumption of the Virgin to illustrate it: a picture (by some now supposed to be that in the National Gallery) which fell under priestly ban and was covered in the church where it hung by a veil which hid it from men's sight.

But it is not in poetry that we must at this time seek the glory of literature in Florence. It was later, in prose, that Letters gained the finest laurels, in a region in which the Latin gift for concrete matter-of-factness has especial scope—the region of history and politics, of Guiccardini and Macchiavelli.

Among the artists, however, as is fitting, do we find the final exponent of the prime

of the Renaissance, not merely a perfect interpreter of its thought and poetry, like Botticelli, but a complete epitome of all its multiform energies, whether in art or knowledge. This exponent is Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519). In his infinite variety he is a head and shoulders taller than his tall contemporaries, and as it is with Shakespeare, so with him, we can best measure his stature by comparing it with the height and number of those about him.

They did not yet include the only man of equal bulk. Michael Angelo was still a boy, dining silently at Lorenzo's table and studying the antique in Lorenzo's palace gardens. But since the days of Cosimo the world of art had become ever more thickly populated with men whose individuality was gradually overriding tradition, and at the cook-shop in the Square new generations had grown up and passed away. In 1490, at the close of Lorenzo's reign, Ghirlandaio (1449–1494), the popular painter, the romantic, prosaic story-teller on canvas, was drawing towards the close of his busy life. Benozzo Gozzoli (1420–1497) had long since finished his glowing frescoes on the walls of the Riccardi Palace,

in which an idealized Lorenzo rides disguised as one of the Magi. Piero di Cosimo (1462–1521) had brought his strong brush and subtle intellectual fancy to bear upon tales of heroes and demigods; Antonio Pollaiuolo (1429–1498) lent them his force, his curiosity, his skill and joy in problems of anatomy. Outside Florence, the incomparable Mantegna (1431–1506) was brooding over his antiques, and fashioning his statuesque men and women, now at his native Padua, now at Mantua, in the Castello, under the rich and worrying patronage of the Duchess, Isabella d'Este, the wife of the reigning Gonzaga. And Piero della Francesca (1420–1492) had portrayed wellnigh the last of his majestic, square-browed women with necks like pillars, so reminiscent of the Etruscan figures dug up in the fields of his Umbria; had painted his great battles, his snorting horses, his soldiers in blue and bronze; above all, his rose-wreathed risen Christ, regal, austere, compelling, on the walls of the Palazzo Communale of his birthplace, Borgo San Sepolcro.

Luca Signorelli (1450–1523), the painter of Orvieto's Cathedral, was making fresh discoveries in anatomy and inaugurating a new

kind of naturalism, in which science sometimes got the better of art; was, with his nude boys and strong, full-breasted Madonnas, preparing the way for his future pupil, Michael Angelo. While at Venice, the day of Giovanni Bellini (1428?–1516) was continuing, and that of Carpaccio dawning; the noonday of Titian, Tintoret, Veronese was still to come. And Ferrara, under the princely Estes, could boast of Cossa (died about 1480) the colourist, the poetic painter of the pageant of stars and seasons in the Schifanoia Palace; as well as of the exotic Cosimo di Tura (1432–1496), with a taste more ascetic than spiritual, with his strange, austere, anatomical contortions and his fervid fancy.

Nor were sculptors wanting, more especially in Tuscany. Hardly two years had passed since the death of Andrea Verrocchio (1435–1486), the master of Leonardo, the man who, after Donatello, had done most to fuse the real and the ideal and to keep a suavity in strength: the master of enigmatic marble women, of the earnest, doubting St. Thomas and the understanding Christ, those two bronze figures in the niche of Or San Michele; the creator, above all, of the little King of Life,

the bronze boy with the dolphin in his arm, who enhances the vitality of the world and guards the fountain in the court of the Palazzo Vecchio. Desiderio da Settignano (1428–1464) had been trying, with less genius but equal zeal, to make the same experiments when death cut short his career; the facile, eclectic Rossellino (1409–1464) and Benedetto da Maiano (1442–1497) worked by the like noble laws; and so, with his individual chisel, did Mino da Fiesole (1431–1484), Mino, the exquisite, the adept in distinction, whose grace was his force—the sculptor of sentinel-angels and prelates sleeping their last sleep, of gold and white shrines, of long-necked Madonnas and babies with dimpled feet.

Out of all this greatness there grew Leonardo da Vinci, immortal painter, great sculptor, poet, musician, instrument-maker, thinker, engineer, man of science, prophet of modern methods and inventions; an artist who conceived of art as a vocation harder than that of any monk; the completest man of any excepting Shakespeare, of a vitality as inexhaustible as his, exercised in many more directions. But unlike that of Shakespeare,

it was concerned with the intellect, not with life. Leonardo's experience did not throb with tears and laughter; it was passed at once through the crucible of his potent mind.

"There is," he wrote, "no capable man, you may believe me, except Leonardo, the Florentine, who has no need to bring himself into notice, because he has work for all his lifetime." That is the clue to him—a superb consciousness of himself, which led him beyond self, into an impersonal region where he served Truth: "Truth . . . the only daughter of Time," to quote his words. "Savage is he who saves himself," he wrote, and that economy he never practised. But his art often forced him to be reticent and to avoid his fellows, unless they were colleagues, or employers. "A man," he said, "who serves two masters makes neither a good artist nor a good companion." No less did he insist upon an artist being an adequate man before all else, and for absence of mind he had no mercy. Art was to him an ocean into which all streams—science, experience, knowledge, wit, invention—flowed; to know one thing you must know all. And only to know one thing was a disgrace. "The

painter," he wrote, "should aim at universality, because there is a great want of self-respect in doing one thing well and another ill." He gave his whole existence to the service of art.

We know little of his life outside his professional flittings from Florence to Milan and his stay at the court of Francis I. His chief adventure, and that has not been proved, was that he was appointed engineer to the "Devatdar" of Syria (between 1483 and 1487), and went to Armenia, whence he wrote his vivid, accurate letters about the Caucasus. Even personal details are wanting, except that he was handsome, and so strong that he could break an iron horse-shoe between his fingers.

Leonardo's chronicle is that of a colossal mind, moving everywhere, observing, registering all things, judging none, loving many, scorning some, pitying most. His fiery compassion embraced every living creature. Now he sees a swarm of bees drowned, now a calf taken from its mother to be killed: "Oh Justice, Oh God, why dost Thou not wake!" he cries. And he has a use for all things, even the basest refuse in Nature;

it can be converted into salt, into materials for his palette. Condemnation is a fault in economy, and to him nothing, nobody, is vile. Like Shakespeare and the sun, he shines upon the just and the unjust. In this he is essentially of the later Renaissance. The austere purity of the morals of the Guilds has disappeared. Leonardo is spiritual, but he is a-moral; he believes in incentives, not in barriers. His morality is, like all else, included and involved in art. "If the thing loved is base, the lover becomes base," he wrote.

In another fashion, also, does he stand for his generation. His search is no longer for unity, it is for the Universal; he does not desire to draw all things into one, but to open out one thing into all, and Universality, not Unity, is the badge of the later Renaissance. Leonardo's miraculous range, at once telescope and microscope, sweeps over creation to its smallest detail: over air, fire, water, lightning, dust and mist; over every bird, beast and plant, with their habits; over mechanics, "the Paradise of mathematics, because here we come to its fruits"; over the place of miracles in a Nature that "is

full of infinite causes"; and over the evils of swaddling-bands for babies whose "tearful complaints" none understand; over the methods of naval warfare and the art of constructing a clean stable, of building a temple, and of dressing well; over the shape of Mount Taurus and the curves of the human figure and the movements of the Loire at Amboise, with all their consequences; over the non-existence of ghosts, on the ground that if they were existent they would imply a vacuum in Nature, and hence are impossible. He played on a silver lute made by himself in the shape of a horse's head, according to laws of acoustics that he had discovered; and he was courtier enough to obey the constant summons of the Duke of Milan to make music for him at the Castello. He invented flying-machines, he foreshadowed steamboats, he loved velocity. "In Romagna, the realm of all stupidity, vehicles with four wheels are used," runs one of his jottings. He was a deep student of the laws of optics; he believed in the infinite divisibility of matter. "Every quantity is intellectually conceivable as infinitely divisible. What is called Nothingness is to be found only in time and in speech."

Leonardo is a living proof that nothing is so definite and practical as real imagination, and the best definition of his calm and boundless curiosity lies in the juxtaposition of such entries in his note-books as—

"Paul was snatched up to heaven." . . . "Giuliano da Maria, physician, has a steward without hands." . . . "Giants who lived in the sea upon whales, grampuses and ships." . . . "Snow taken from the high peaks of mountains might be carried to hot places and let to fall at festivals in open places at summer time," and the like.

To him nothing was dull but unreality and its shibboleths. He distrusted what he called "good culture without the disposition." Anyone," said he, "who in discussion relies upon authority, uses not his understanding but his memory." Above all, he loved and sought the strange. He would follow a face that took his fancy all day through the streets of Milan. Once he brought into his room a number of reptiles—toads, efts, vipers, newts and lizards—and, choosing some part of each, made of them a creature so dreadful that none could see it without terror. The story might serve as a symbol of his imagination. Unlike

the more facile minds that draw a fictitious real out of the fantastic, Leonardo evoked the fantastic from the real only and would have no other kind.

But with all his taste for the grotesque, he never tried to garble truth. Patience was his heritage from the earlier scholars of the New Learning; reverence for fact was the link that bound him to modern minds. Together these qualities formed the critical spirit. Leonardo was the first modern man of science.

"Impatience, the mother of stupidity, praises brevity," he says, "and then men want to comprehend the mind of God, in which the Universe is included. Oh, human stupidity! do you not perceive, though you have been with yourself all your life, that you are not yet aware of the thing that you possess most of—that is, your folly? You deceive yourself and others, despising the mathematical sciences in which truth dwells. . . . And then you occupy yourself with miracles . . . and you fancy you have wrought miracles when you spoil a work of some speculative mind."

Or again: "Short cuts do harm to knowledge and to love."

This last saying might be taken as one key-note of his attitude to knowledge; his "Wisdom is the Daughter of experience," as the other. This was the revolutionary note; it effected for natural science, what the earlier Renaissance had effected for scholarship—it put experience where men had hitherto put authority. Leonardo would acknowledge none of the "ancients" in science, except Archimedes. "He who can go to the fountain, does not go to the water," he said, and his words rang in inductive science: rang in the investigators of Nature, from Rabelais, Galileo, Palissy, Bacon and Montaigne, to Newton, Boyle, Huxley and Darwin.

To Leonardo, the Nature-worshipper, Nature was a measureless workshop—a workshop with dark corners, but not so dark that man might not explore them if he approached with candour and humility. He recognized Nature's ravaging cruelty, but he regarded her as governed by immutable laws. He took her no farther than she would go. Man might only handle facts—he left mystery to God. And before mystery Leonardo bowed. True once more to the

Renaissance, he believed in soul as strongly as in science, and without trying to make them one, as a Ficino would have done, he was convinced that each must work out its own ends. All truth, he saw, was related. He was spiritual rather than religious, a spiritual freethinker, a Theist, who felt that freedom gave fitter scope than a cage to the wings of human faith. He hated cages and cage-keepers. He thought that they bred self-love and hypocrisy. "Pharisees, that is to say Friars," is one of his headings; and under "Churches and Habitations of Friars," "many there will be," he wrote, "who will give up work and labour and poverty of life and of goods, and will go to live among wealth in splendid buildings, declaring that this is the way to make themselves acceptable to God."

But he waged war against materialism and its followers—"sacks in which their food may be stowed"—and he firmly believed in the great destiny of the soul. "Our body is dependent on heaven, and heaven on the Spirit," he said. . . . "The part always has a tendency to reunite with its whole." "The hope and desire of returning home to a former state is like that of the moth to the light."

"The motive power is the cause of all life." Such was his creed. He made against dogma, for the sake of faith; the power of the Spirit filled him with awe. "Throughout Europe," he wrote one Good Friday, "there will be a lamentation of great nations over the death of one man who died in the East." And this thought of the human-divine, with its sense of human possibilities and divine inspiration, blows straight from the Renaissance through a great and fervent intellect which acknowledged the unknown.

A modern Leonardo was, also, in another sense. He was a conscious stylist who knew the importance of culmination. "The pen," he wrote, "must necessarily have the penknife for companion." For him the artist no longer ranked with other craftsmen. He says so in his *Fable*, brief and tense, of the pear-tree, who, commiserated by the other trees, was about to be cut down and borne from the grove. "I am going," replied the pear-tree, "with the husbandman . . . to the workshop of a good sculptor, and he will make me take the form of Jove the God; and I shall be dedicated in a temple and adored by men . . . while you . . . remain stripped of

your boughs, which will be put round me to do me honour."

It is a tragic calamity that Leonardo's model for his great equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza should never have been executed and should have been destroyed; that his sculpture should be lost, as well as so many of his paintings; that of these only his Last Supper at Milan, his two Virgins of the Rocks—one in Paris, one in London—his unfinished Adoration of the Magi in the Uffizi, his Medusa, also there, the Virgin and St. Anne of the Louvre, and its Mona Lisa, should, with some precious drawings, constitute all the authentic work we have from his hand. Yet each of these relics contains the essence of him, none is inadequate. Perhaps self-expression came to him more easily because one thing, as it seems, was left out of him—the power of suffering. Intellect makes against emotion; he was too much of a disembodied intellect—too much set upon reaching its goal, serenity of mind—to have much capacity for pain. Michael Angelo it was who showed the world what it was to have a genius for suffering, to strike the deeper, intimate note which went

home to men's business and bosoms—the note of struggle, which broke up the smiling beauty of the Renaissance. Such was not the office of Leonardo. He loved what was secret and hidden; he courted mystery, for it did not make him ill at ease; he was a kind of mystical sceptic and believed that Truth, the "Daughter of Time" would give a final answer. Much of this stands revealed in the types that he chose; in the thin, subtle lips of his men, in the smile that haunted his women's faces. He suggests, he provokes, he satisfies. He belongs to all times.

CHAPTER III

THE RENAISSANCE IN ROME

If Florence embodied the Renaissance in its most individual aspect, Rome was like a statement of the movement in its most generalized form. This was natural. Rome was cosmopolitan; it was the seat of the Curia and the Vatican, the centre, therefore, of wealthy patrons and delicate dilettantes, of connoisseurs in art and in scholarship who kept retinues of artists and scholars and vulgarly vied with one another in their excesses of refinement. Free from any stress of responsibility, even that of earning their emoluments, and disliking the grosser semblances of the materialism they professed, they ended by putting fastidiousness in the place of spirituality, and became theologians over questions of taste. A time when prelates would not read St. Paul because the impure Latin might spoil their style; when Æneas Silvius, later Pius II, complained that

so many church-bells were bad for a man of letters; when beauty was truth, and the truth was by no means beautiful, this was a better time for art and learning than for religion.

And Rome, with the surrounding Campagna, where every turn of the spade or plough might bring to light some age-long hidden Venus, or marble athlete; where each overflow of the yellow Tiber might disclose precious freight, was, as it were, the main cistern of the Renaissance—not of its ideas, but of its solid wealth. Here Eugenius IV, on his walks, would stop to watch the excavations; here Cardinals could buy a field cheap and find it a priceless investment; here, for artists and adventurers alike, there prevailed security and appreciation. Small wonder that such a climate forced on the Renaissance, which, under its influence, ripened quicker here than elsewhere and earlier showed symptoms of decline. Rome fostered the fine flower of a serene Epicureanism, which found its perfect expression in Raphael, its reactionary opponent in Michael Angelo; developed, also, the consummate art of a complacent expediency,

embodied in Macchiavelli, and counteracted by the idealist, Giordano Bruno. It was, in short, the Rome of the Popes and Cardinals of the Renaissance, and they, in their turn, were epitomized, if a little caricatured, in the exuberant cynicism of Pietro Aretino.

From the day of Eugenius IV (1431–1447) and his successor, the scholarly Nicholas V, the founder of the Vatican Library and the patron of Fra Angelico, to that of Pius IV, these hierarchs formed a dynasty of sumptuous and unscrupulous patrons. It was not surprising that when young Giovanni de' Medici went to Rome, his father Lorenzo warned him to beware of his conduct in that "sink of iniquity." Charity has not been the only cloak for a multitude of sins, and the elastic mantle of Rome also covered disbeliefs. It was a sign of men's decadence that they knew what they disbelieved, rather than what they believed. Disbelief was convenient to them with its sanction of their vices. The dead roots of a dead religion had been left in the soil and made corruption more corrupt. "Religion must not be regarded as old wives' stories," said a would-be defender of orthodoxy. That Christianity was looked upon as

an uneducated superstition is indicated by the fact that Cardinal Sadoleto, Leo X's secretary, was nicknamed "the *Christian* Cardinal." The uninterfering deities of past ages were alone attended to. One prelate swore only by them, another spoke of a friend who had died, as dancing "in the mystic dance with the Olympian gods." Burlesques were acted of the early Christians' doings in the catacombs, and men changed their Christian names for those of Roman heroes. Licence and indifference masqueraded in the guise of freethought, not the truth-seeking freethought of Leonardo, but a materialism that meant to shake off shackles. The infallible Popes found it easier than ordinary folk to separate their lives from their office; they foreshadowed modern notions and made themselves into "Super-men." "Let us," said Leo X, "enjoy the Papacy since God has given it to us," and he thought no worse of himself for saying it.

It cannot be denied that Pius II, Paul II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, Alexander VI, Pius III, Julius II, Leo X, the best-known Popes of the period between 1458 and 1522, were all more or less unscrupulous and most

of them evil. Sixtus IV was an accomplice in the plot against the Medici which ended in the murder of Giuliano; Alexander VI, with due deduction for legend, shows an appalling record of crimes. Poison in their time was a fine art, simony and theft were in the day's work. And the Cardinals followed suit, Alexander's son, Cesare Borgia (1475–1507) chief among them. Yet, whatever these men appear to us, to their own age they did not seem monsters, and their significance lies, not in their immorality, but in the lowness of the moral level that made them possible. There are one or two evident reasons why Rome should have been more corrupt than other cities. It was the religious metropolis of the world, with all the world's paraphernalia for religion—the place where faith was bound to grow professional; it was also the treasury of a wealth which meant power without effort. Unlike Lorenzo and his circle, the patrons of Rome were not artists, they were collectors and millionaires; and scholarship, their one serious occupation, was no longer the strenuous pursuit it had been in the past generation. It had become exquisite, a little dandified, an opportunity

for style rather than a means to knowledge. Yet it is among men of learning, however degenerate, that the more remarkable spirits, whether churchmen or laymen, are to be found.

The forcing-house of Rome very early produced the type of the Polonius-scholar. Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterwards Pope Pius II (1405–1464), lived at the same time as Cosimo, and while the morals of Florence were still at their purest, he was already an advanced opportunist. The most disinterested of students, the most self-interested of worldlings, he left his native Siena to be a great man's secretary at the Council of Basel, where his remarkable literary gifts stood him in good stead. In the same kind of capacity, this born adventurer travelled to England, Scotland, Flanders, France, wielding his pen first on this side then on that, as suited his fortunes, selling his services as dear as he could. When Italy became inconvenient, he got an advantageous post in Germany, and by using his talents against old friends, leaped rather than rose to be a Cardinal and, ere long, a Pope (1458). Suave, brilliant, clement, when he ran no risk by clemency,

of a finely polished culture, he would have been surprised to find himself regarded as immoral. The obligation to "get on" was to him what the duty of self-dependence is to us; it was the respectability of the Renaissance. The diligent service of the master who happened best to promote one's chances, and loyalty to him while he was useful, was the only code of honour then acknowledged, and Pope Pius talks of these his virtues with an air as noble as that of any Bayard. That his pontificate should induce him to withdraw from publication his improper novel *Lucretia and Euryalus*, and his equally undesirable *Letters*, would have seemed to him foolish. He turned his thoughts to art, and employed Pinturicchio to paint his life in the Cathedral Library of his native Siena.

Or there was Cardinal Bembo, who flourished half a century later as secretary of Leo X, and yet was Pius II's spiritual contemporary. But he was of better stuff and of more distinguished literary gifts. In the elegance of his Latinity he was second only to Lorenzo Valla. Graceful, yet of a racy wit, he was a born letter-writer, and a critic of himself so severe that he revised

every one of his works forty times before publishing it. Not without success. His *Asolani*, an idyll dedicated to Lucrezia Borgia, was hailed with hyperbole by the literary circles of his generation. Nevertheless he rendered real service to literature, for, lover of the classics though he was, he saw the worth and the beauty of the Italian vernacular and carried on the work of Poliziano. His *Defence of the Vulgar Tongue* showed him a more suitable guardian of the language than of the faith. But in the topsy-turvy morality of the age he shines with a paradoxical lustre. For he remained faithful to the mother of his five children till her death, and his last poem to her was written fourteen years later, and three years after he was made Cardinal.

Among these scarlet-hatted sybarites and easy-going *literati* there had, however, been, here and there, vestiges of the old tradition. There were sober "Academies" for learning, like that of Cardinal Bessarion, the Greek, the pupil of Gemistos Plethon; or that of Valla's disciple, Pomponius Lætus, the famous lecturer, the enthusiast for Latin. And in the day of Bembo there was at least one noble soul, who brought to freethought the same

earnestness that his predecessors had put into scholarship. Pomponazzo (1462–1525), the professor of philosophy at Padua, Ferrara and Bologna, restated the tenets of Aristotle at the perilous expense of tradition, and devoted his powers with religious zeal to proving from the Stagirite's *De Animâ* that the soul was not immortal. In this cause, to him the cause of truth, this transcendental materialist gave up ease and suffered persecution. "Seeking to penetrate the secret things of God," a man, he says, "forgets to thirst, to hunger, to sleep, to spit . . . is derided of all men and held for a fool." Pomponazzo's quest involved more than a philosophical dispute. Orthodoxy had made its stronghold in the mediæval version of Aristotle. The publication of emended editions (1468–1498) had already dealt the Church a heavy blow, but the loud proclamation of the philosopher's real ideas was a trumpet-blast before which the city fell. Since the twelfth century war had raged round him and round the nature of the soul, between the followers of the Arab heretic, Averroes, who believed that the soul was part of a Universal Intelligence, and those of Alexander of

Aphrodisias, who believed that the soul was evolved from the senses, and the mind from the soul. To these names in the thirteenth century, was added that of the great Thomas Aquinas, who took the vague and unrelated God of Aristotle and placed him in the centre of the Christian theology, with its implication of His direct dealings with the immortal soul of man. Pomponazzo went back from the commentators to the original source; and his studies led him to espouse and to develop the views of Alexander. Since, he said, soul and mind were derived from matter and were inseparable from the body, since they had no link with the Universal Intellect outside them, it followed that they must perish with the body. He preached the permanence of natural law; he denied the existence of miracles, of angels and demons. How could we believe in them, when each religion had its own Saints and miracles? To him Christ and Moses and Mahomet ranked as equals, and only a superstitious ignorance lent them miraculous qualities. Christianity would decay like other creeds and institutions; there were signs of its approaching end.

Small wonder that the Church scented

danger in the air. The Lateran Council of 1513 (the year of Leo X's accession) passed a decree forbidding professors of philosophy to teach any tenets but those of orthodoxy, and banned the doctrine of the soul's mortality. Such utterances did not check Pomponazzo. He continued his train of thought. Yet so baffling is the mind of him who stands between an old world and a new, so crude is he and crafty, so sincere and insincere, so much the victim of the Church that bred him and of the tradition he rejects, that this bold man of science was wont to solve insuperable difficulties by his confidence in the influence of the stars. In 1516 he published his great *De Immortalitate animæ*. It raised a storm; pamphlets poured in upon him; it was burnt at Venice, and he only escaped persecution through Bembo's intercession with Pope Leo. The book contained nothing that could matter, was the Cardinal's plea. His task was not difficult for, in spite of the Lateran Council, Leo X himself disbelieved in the immortality of the soul. Pomponazzo got off by making a paradoxical declaration that it was only as a philosopher that he believed in his propositions; as a Christian, he accepted the

whole orthodox faith. He knew that ideas were indestructible. And his work met a need which continued. When one of his disciples lectured at Pisa and began on Aristotle's meteorological treatises, the audience broke out into turbulent shouts of "*Quid de anima?*" —"What of the soul?"

Leo X and his two predecessors, Alexander VI and Julius II, may be taken as the archetypes of the Popes of the Renaissance. That race of potentates presents certain contradictory aspects. With them, more than with other rulers, mediævalism lingered on; it was to their interest to keep things as they had been, as well as to fight for their territories; to them, too, belonged the faculty to tap unprecedented sources of wealth. They could always raise money—if by nothing else, by the pretence of a Crusade against the Turks, and thus they had ready means to practise their antiquated privileges. On this raw kind of barbarism the Renaissance was grafted without intermediary preparation, and the Princes of the Vatican, whose sway depended as much upon being in accord with the times as behind them, had in some fashion to adopt the new culture. The needful link was provided by

their wealth, which enabled them to become Patrons. Thus, like the capitalists of our own day, they bought and collected, hired counsellors and artists, without any true love of art or letters. Leo X was the exception, but Leo X was a Medici, polished, astute, æsthetic, critical, though without the poetic or mystic vision of his father, Lorenzo. And yet the Pontiffs of this period, conquerors, robbers and politicians, survive for posterity mainly as the promoters of arts which they regarded as mere merchandise—an asset in their fortunes. Many of them, it is true, cared for architecture, notably Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, and the trio we have chosen; but their vast schemes for rebuilding and extending St. Peter's and the Vatican by Bramante (1444–1514) and Michael Angelo, and the Castel San Angelo by the brothers, Giuliano and Antonio Sangallo * (1443–1517; 1455?–1534), were a form of self-aggrandizement rather than the result of any beauty-loving impulse. And when Sixtus IV summoned Piero della Francesca

* There was a third Sangallo, the younger Antonio, nephew of these two, who built the Palazzo Farnese and died in 1546.

and others to decorate his Sistine Chapel, the motive was much the same.

Of the two Popes we have singled out besides Leo X, Alexander VI had a taste for showy splendour, and the rough old soldier, Julius II, liked to think of himself as a great Patron, who could at his will bully artists like a slave-driver, or raise them to the rank of cherished princes.

It is for reasons outside art that Alexander Borgia figures as a type. With his striking administrative powers, he might have stood out more prominently as a forcible ruler, had not his ill-fame eclipsed his capabilities. He represents, as it were, the opportunities for sin provided by the Renaissance. This *bon vivant* and evil liver would have been a signally bad man at any time, but the Renaissance, with its classical revival of cynical vices, could alone give him an imagination in his immorality and enable him to be a dilettante in crime; no other period could have furnished his appetite with seasonings so perverted. Artistic murders of friends and relations, disappearances of Cardinals, sudden influxes into Papal coffers, black deeds set to the sound of lutes and viols, have made a proverb

of him and his son, Cesare, and there was quite enough fire to produce smoke.

Julius II and the accomplished Leo shine by comparison. But they live for us now not as Popes and powers, but as the private friends of the real sovereigns—Raphael and Michael Angelo.

Julius II summoned both these artists to Rome, Angelo in 1503, Raphael in 1506, at the instigation of Raphael's fellow-citizen, the architect, Bramante of Urbino. Angelo was twenty-nine, Raphael twenty-three. His father, Giovanni Santo, that charming painter of slant-eyed Madonnas, had directed his course. The boy had worked under Perugino, had been drawn to Florence by the fame of Leonardo, and was already a master of his craft. Julius employed him at once upon no less a task than the decoration of the Stanze, his chosen apartments in the Vatican. Raphael's success was born full-grown, and lasted unchanged from his arrival in Rome until his death in 1520. It was compelled by his person no less than by his genius—indeed, the two were one. Every one knows his face: the serene brow, the clear unquestioning eyes, the brown hair falling from beneath the black cap; and

his looks were but an emblem of his nature. All men, says Vasari, great or small, "became as of one mind when they began to labour in the society of Raphael . . . every base thought departed before his influence . . . his sweet and gracious nature was so perfect in all the charities that not only was he honoured of men, but even of the animals, who would follow his steps and always loved him." Raphael was the Orpheus of the Renaissance. Unlike Michael Angelo, he had no enemies; he knew neither care nor struggle, and his art, devoid of these elements, remained, like his life, devoid also of that enriching contrast which is so interesting to posterity. "He did not," says a contemporary, "lead the life of an artist but of a prince." His palace was built by Bramante; he was rich enough to keep a troop of designers all over Italy and Greece; the great Cardinal Bibbiena, whom his brush has immortalized, wanted him to marry his niece. He never, we hear, went out without some "fifty painters" at his heels.

Yet in spite of all this glory, he kept his singular modesty, and his artist's conscience was intact. "Whether I have in myself any

portion of the excellence of art," he wrote, "I know not, but labour heartily to secure it." He pursued perfection wherever he found it. When Michael Angelo's angels on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel were first shown him, there came to him a new revelation of the possibilities of his art. He hastened straight to the Church of St. Agostino, where stood his fresco of the Prophet Isaiah—he washed it out and repainted it. With him there was no despair, only accomplishment. His means were always adequate to his ends. The radiant amenity of his Parnassus, with Apollo and all the poets—the lustre of his School of Athens, in which philosophers and theologians are holding converse in true Platonic fashion—the rest of his frescoes in the Stanze, with their feats of foreshortening and perspective—the famous Loggie of the Vatican, with their arabesques and allegories —the Farnesina Villa, painted with the fables of Psyche and of Galatea—the sumptuous portraits of rose-robed Popes and scarlet prelates—of his masters Julius II and Leo X, of the Cardinals Bibbiena and Inghirami—testify to the high level of his achievement, to his exquisite sense of colour and of rhythm.

Much more so than the academic grace and composure of his Holy Families, whose over-formulated beauty made such an easy appeal to many generations; more than the greatest of these canvases, painted for the Church of San Sisto, the famous Sistine Madonna, with its triumphant Child and all its superb power of composition.

His mural paintings and his portraits prove, however, that in two capacities his surprising reputation is secure. He is a great decorator, one of the greatest of portrait-painters. His very defects promoted his qualities. The literalness which prevented his seeing the soul of beauty in reality and led him to replace it by the sublime—which made of him an idealizer, a very different matter from an idealist—helped him to grasp more lucidly and impersonally what was before him, and to give to the world those masterly pictures of the Pagan churchmen and Christian cynics of the day. But he could not have interpreted them thus perfectly had he criticized them. They are painted without satire or protest; he accepted the standards of his time. To him, we may be sure, it did not seem unfitting that Leo X should plan to offer him (as

tradition tells) a Cardinal's hat. It has been thought that it was one of the motives which made him play fast and loose with his betrothed, Bibbiena's niece, until the unfortunate lady died. Perhaps a more potent reason was his romantic love for one mistress, who ruled him altogether. The only way, indeed, that Agostino Chigi could get his palace walls and ceilings finished was by inviting the lady to live there and thus bring the painter back to the house. He was, such is the verdict even of his worshipper, Vasari, "devoted somewhat too earnestly to the pleasures of life." For him there existed no conviction of sin, no day of judgment. Raphael is of the immortals, and his place among them is that of the purest courtier n the court of heaven; he is perhaps the most celestially matter-of-fact genius that has existed.

"Seeing that good judges and beautiful women are scarce, I avail myself of certain ideas which come into my mind"—so he wrote to Baldassare Castiglione, and the sentence sums up his strength and his limitation. He was the genius of taste, not a man of beliefs; his aim was to create complete

beauty, to take the human form he knew so well and to idealize it. He was the opposite of Michael Angelo, who took the human form as it was, and wrested beauty from it, beauty rough-hewn but infinite. Michael Angelo endeavoured to make the human divine, Raphael to make the divine human, to re-establish godlike shapes upon the earth. The one stood for harmony and balance, the other for conflict and for depth; the one found his world outside himself, the other within his own soul; and while one leads you into his heaven and shuts the door behind its radiant security, the other plunges you into hell and raises you to the stars and teaches you the limitless possibilities of spiritual adventure.

Michael Angelo Buonarotti faced two ways. If he was the last of the great race of Renaissance artists, he was also the first of the moderns. He brought into art the element of struggle and of sorrow; he imbued it with religion. Not with the naïf dogma of a Fra Angelico, or the ascetic ideals of monastic art, but with spiritual religion—with aspiration, with the direct relation of the soul to God, with a deep humility, and as deep

a sense of man's divine possibilities. "It sufficeth not," he said, "to be merely a great master in painting and very wise, but I think that it is needful for a painter to be very good in his mode of life, even, if possible, a Saint, so that the Holy Spirit may inspire his intellect." The passage shows him almost as different from Leonardo as from Raphael. It was not that he underrated the intellect—no one had a more forcible mind; but he was simple, and feeling came first with him.

Human nature meant to him more than Nature—as the Renaissance used the term. He had a passionate heart, and thus again he introduced an unheard-of element into painting, something far more personal than the intellectual pity of Da Vinci. "No one should laugh," he said, "when the whole world is in tears"—a phrase which falls with a thud of warning in the midst of the light ribaldries of Rome. Yet he was witty himself, as his sayings attest, and he could laugh till he cried. The whole of his religion seems to be expressed in his two marble *Pietas;* the earlier work in St. Peter's, executed when he first came to Rome; the later one, sculptured at the close of his life for his

own monument, and now in the Duomo of Florence; both alike the epitome of human sorrow and all that lifts and dignifies it.

Michael Angelo was a Catholic because he was born one, and because, in his day, Luther represented violence and sensation, neither of which was sympathetic to him. But Savonarola was the voice to which he listened; his writings and the Scriptures, besides the works of Dante, were his favourite reading. He had, indeed, the Protestant temperament, in the original sense of the word; the spirit which protested against abuses, the unecclesiastical mind, to which the life was all, the Church but a means. One day when he was standing intent before Donatello's St. Mark in the niche of Or San Michele: "If St. Mark looked like this," he said, "we may safely believe what he has written." Authority meant little to him—conscience, the voice of God in the soul, meant all. He treated Pope and beggar with the same frank human equality; indeed Pope Clement VII always hastened to ask him to sit down in his presence for fear he should do so without leave.

Buonarotti's art—"mine idol and my lord"—was of one piece with his life.

Nor hath God deigned to show Himself
elsewhere
More clearly than in human forms sublime,
Which, since they image Him, alone I
love,

runs one of his sonnets. Unlike Raphael, his ends were always greater than his means, yet his means were matter for his profoundest study, for days of hardship and nights of watching, and, however vast the ends, these miraculous means sufficed. And while they amazed all beholders—whether on wall or ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, or in St. Peter's, or at Florence, in San Lorenzo—the master's vision had at once gone on past them to the problems above him and beyond. Unlike Raphael, again, the life of this man acquainted with sorrows and with joys was a tissue of contrasts and of changes.

His parents were of gentle birth, his foster-mother was a stone-mason's wife. With the milk of his nurse, he says, he sucked in chisels and hammers. But he began as an apprentice to painting, in the *bottega* of Ghirlandaio, who recognized his powers from the first. After his gift for sculpture had unfolded, he went

to study the antiques in the Medici Gardens, where Lorenzo had set them for the training of artists, and he worked with Donatello's old pupil, Bertoldo. Lorenzo knew genius when he saw it. He offered the boy bed and board in his palace; he dressed him in a violet mantle; he treated him as a son. And Buonarotti perceived his own vocation. Intense and unremitting in his labours, nothing seemed to him too small or too great to serve his art. Now he is mastering problems of perspective, now dissecting a human body in the room given him by the Prior, in the Church of San Spirito, now reading Petrarch and Boccaccio with a chosen friend. He saw all sorts of men, and, throughout his life, he liked the simple folk, however rude—pedlar-artists and village masons, whose primitive jests and stories delighted him, for whom he would use his chisel that they might sell his works as their own.

From the day that Julius II called him to Rome, his life, straight and sincere, became involved in the miserable intrigues of adoring Popes, meddling Cardinals, and jealous artists. He lived under the reign of nine pontiffs—Julius II, Leo X, Adrian VI, Clement VII,

Paul III, Julius III, Marcellus, Paul IV, Pius IV—and these sixty-one years of his existence were practically absorbed by three great dramas: "The Tragedy of the Tomb," as his biographer, Condivi, called the history of the Tomb projected by Julius II; the strenuous, straightforward action of the Sistine Chapel; and the tragi-comedy of St. Peter's. The image of Michael Angelo, seeking marble for the Tomb in the quarries of Carrara, kept short of supplies, hampered, undaunted, carving colossal figures out of the rocks while he waited, might be taken as a symbol of his art.

As for that vast monument of Papal vainglory, the design for which comprised near fifty figures, its history needs no re-telling. It is well known how for ten years Julius, the bluff, choleric, generous old tyrant, bent on regaining the States of the Church, in turn cajoled and rated the artist—the only man whose will was stronger than his own. One hour it was fisticuffs, another ducats; after the insults, Michael Angelo generally set out for Florence and had to be won back again. But the Pope loved his great victim, even while he tormented him. One day when

Buonarotti had turned the tables, a Bishop, standing by, excused him as an ignorant artist. "'Tis thou who art the ignoramus with thy impertinences . . . get out of my sight and be hanged to thee!" cried Julius, and the Bishop was hustled out of the room. The explosive admiration of Julius was no light matter, and his surprise visits to the sculptor, and the bridge that he had built to make them easier between the Castel San Angelo and the workshop, were doubtful blessings to Buonarotti. After endless dallyings, and when the Piazza was crowded with blocks of marble, the work was cut short by the plots of Bramante, the omnipotent architect, the designer of the new St. Peter's. This noble adapter of classic principles to modern requirements, this master of space and of austere simplicity, justly wielded great sway in Rome. Jealous of the reputation of his idol, Raphael, he persuaded Julius to give up his expensive scheme and to commission Michael Angelo to paint his Chapel—a sure means, it seemed, of proving the pre-eminence of Raphael. The result was the miracle of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, achieved in the teeth of every hardship: of damp, of bad

apprentices, of the furies of the Pope, who rushed in, so impatient to see it that he shook down showers of dust from the scaffolding.

Of the fated Tomb, once more resumed, again given up, little was completed except the majestic Moses, the Law-giver, the friend of God, as Angelo conceived him. The effect was amazing, not alone upon Pagan Christians. "The Jews," says a witness, "are to be seen every Saturday, their Sabbath, hurrying like a flight of swallows, men and women . . to worship this figure." For us it embodies the strange friendship of two human beings, so diverse as almost to seem hostile, yet both so simple and direct that they could forget Pope and vassal and understand one another as men. With Leo X, the vacillating diplomat, whose splendid love of art obliterates his lack of imagination, whose exotic magnificence seems to be summed up in his strange collection of ape and elephant, of chameleon and civet cat, Buonarotti could form no such intimacy unless it were at rare moments, when Leo sat listening to music, rapt, his head sunk upon his breast; or when he went hunting "without a stole," in

spectacles and top-boots, to the dismay of his Master of the Ceremonies. "The which," said this official, "is quite improper, for no one can kiss his feet."

Yet the remaining great works of Michael Angelo's brush and chisel were due to a Medici, Leo's cousin, Pope Clement VII (1523–1534). He it was who ordered the great tomb of the Medici at Florence, as well as the New Sacristy to enshrine it; who thus gave us the monument of his cousin Giuliano, Duke of Nemours, and of Giuliano's nephew, Lorenzo of Urbino; he, also, who commissioned Buonarotti to paint the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel. The master's later outlook upon life, deep-hearted, sorrowful, victorious, is expressed in the figures of those marble princes, brooding eternally over the recumbent forms of Night and Morning, Dawn and Twilight, whose every lineament is charged with the stress and suffering of man, and the force of soul by which he dominates them. It was an outlook which gave voice to all his grief for his dear Florence and her loss of liberty, after the siege by the Imperial Army in 1529, that blockade during which he proved

himself a past-master in the science of fortification. But it gave voice to something larger and more enduring—to a feeling for the misery of the world such as needs no transposing of our thought, but strikes the first modern note in sculpture and moves us as if it were of to-day.

The "Last Judgment"—an incredible achievement of brush, and of dramatic imagination, free from all bonds of tradition—also struck a new and daring note, in spite of its well-worn theme. The picture absorbed him for eight years, and it was not completed until the time of the next Pope, Paul III. In his reign, too, Michael Angelo, the architect of the New Sacristy and of the Laurentian Library in Florence, at length succeeded the great designers, Raphael, Bramante, and Antonio Sangallo (the younger), as Director of the Works at St. Peter's. The rebuilding of that Church had first been decreed by Julius II, at the zenith of his pride, that it might make a fitting temple for his tomb. It became the centre of architects' feuds.. Michael Angelo undertook the heavy task, but refused any payment; he would, he said, take no recom-

pense for work done for the love of God and the Apostle. For thirty years, worn by age and harried by the miserable plots of Sangallo's party, he slaved at his vast design, developing Bramante's earlier scheme, transforming it, making it his own; in the end evoking the famous dome, still unfinished at the time of his death.

His age was as strenuous as his youth. We always have the same picture of him: the shortish man with the broken nose, and the square brow with its seven strongly marked lines, working with the hand of a master and the heart of a humble pupil taught of God; labouring by night as by day, a candle stuck in his pasteboard cap to leave his hands free, and upon his legs leather gaiters which he seldom found time to take off. Never was great artist so pure—a marvel in that age of impurity; and never was one so unworldly attended by such immediate success. The way in which his goodness was recognized, as well as his genius, speaks for the responsive spark still alive somewhere in the Vatican. Princes uncovered before him, all nine Popes were equally his

friends. Once he exclaimed to Julius III that if his soul did not gain by the trials that beset his art, his endeavour was lost. The Pope put his hands upon his shoulders. "You will be a gainer—in soul and body, never doubt it," said he.

He was always surrounded by adoring friends: his devoted Vasari, to whom he wrote daily when he was absent, Cardinal Pole, Sebastiano del Piombo; and by a crowd of disturbing acquaintance, from the Pope's busybody Chamberlain, whom he nicknamed *Tantecose*, to the poorest art-student in Rome. If we could count their number we should stand the more amazed at his output, and better compute what was suffered by this seeker of solitude.

Michael Angelo was loved because he was supremely lovable—for his faults, his volcanic rages and indiscretions, as much as for his virtues. And also because he loved—not only in order to please himself, but with steadfast piety. His brother died of the plague in his arms; he was uniformly kind to his quarrelsome old father, and generous to his scapegrace nephew and his other relations.

He alone nursed his dying servant, Urbino, day and night, and lavished his masterpieces as gifts upon him and his fellows.

He never married. "I have only too much of a wife in my art, she has given me trouble enough," he said. But he knew one great love in his life—his feeling for Vittoria Colonna, Marchesa of Pescara, a feeling amply returned and as unique as the rest of him. It was the love of the star for the star—Platonic in the deepest sense—fired with the search after God and after ideal beauty. And it inspired his beautiful poems, themselves enough to perpetuate his name. "I have often," says Condivi, "heard Michael Angelo discourse of love. . . . For myself, I do not know what Plato says thereof, but I know well that I, who have known Michael Angelo so long and so intimately, have never heard issue from his mouth any but the most honest of words—such as had power to extinguish in youth every ill-governed desire."

Vittoria Colonna was worthy of him. Herself a poet as well as a great lady, she was also imbued with Plato and the new religion, was a guiding spirit of the group that wished to

reconcile the ancient and the modern. She was forty-eight, he sixty-four, when they first met. She gave him his best hours of recreation. For his benefit she initiated a little society of four, which met in church or garden to talk on art and other intellectual matters. "As we entered," writes one of its members, "Michael Angelo and Messer Lætantio were coming out . . . to take their siesta under the trees by the running water. We sat down on a stone bench in the garden at the foot of some laurels, and we were very comfortable leaning back against the green ivy which covered the wall, and thence we could see a good part of the city, very graceful and full of ancient majesty." On one occasion they discussed painting all day, and Michael Angelo begged to spend the night in like fashion. His thoughts jut out beyond those of the rest, like rocks, into the sea of thought and feeling. "What barbarian is there," he asks, "who cannot understand that the foot of a man is nobler than his shoe"? "A bad painter neither can nor knows how to imagine." In these two phrases lies the whole of his artist's creed. "One," he says elsewhere,

"who works in the traces of others is but poorly able to make good use of them." And even more than lack of originality, he condemned what he called "genius without judgment." He stands for the sanity of genius.

Vittoria's picture was one of the only two portraits that he would paint. She died before him. "And I have often heard him say," records Condivi, "that nothing grieved him so much as that, when he went to see her after she passed away from his life, he did not kiss her on the brow . . . as he did kiss her hand."

He lived for nineteen years after her, and towards the end he devoted his brush chiefly to the subject of the Crucifixion, so often drawn by him for his lady. "I am so old," he said, "that Death constantly pulls me by the cape. . . . If it be possible to carve statues or to paint in the other life, I shall not fail to do so there, where there is no more growing old."

He has not failed to go on working here, where few great artists have existed since his day who have not felt his influence. If

Michael Angelo, sculptor, painter, architect, engineer, poet, set, as it were, the final seal upon the Renaissance, he also went beyond it and found that inner world which is our heritage

CHAPTER IV

BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE AND THE WOMEN OF THE RENAISSANCE

THE Renaissance made an epoch for women; it gave them a new field and a new importance. Its appeal to beauty, its quick social developments, the emotional energies and the varied activities that it involved, were peculiarly suited to their powers; and their frequent discussions in loggia or lemon grove about love and friendship, with all their analysis and nice distinctions between the "love for collective humanity, for irrational objects, for the Great-All; . . . for the Angels," though they were little more than metaphysical babble, were yet so finely adapted to feminine intuition that they brought women into society, not as queens of chivalry, but as companions. Nor were women, with their need for expression, slow to make intercourse into an art. They did for life what painting, sculpture, poetry had effected for beauty and

ideas; they were its interpreters. They stand, as it were, a race apart, independent of their several nationalities, with the same defects and qualities, the same outlook, recognizing their family likeness and holding correspondence with each other throughout Europe. Alike they were full of exuberant energy and curiosity; alike they showed a kind of naïve maturity, a paradoxical blending of art and instinct. Large, sunny, graceful, with a golden opinion of themselves and of others, to them everything seemed worth while.

They danced, they sang, they commanded troops, they read Virgil and Cicero and Greek philosophy, they brought up large families, they wrote treatises, they planned dresses, they governed provinces. They were brilliantly efficient; they went far, but they did not go deep.

Appreciative they were, but not discriminating; all their pedagogues were Apollos, and they had not that central warmth in themselves which would have made them feel the inadequacy of the academic spirit. Their largeness was, indeed, not a little like that of their cool unfurnished marble rooms; dignity and courage were their virtues rather than

sensitiveness or humility, and they often showed the heartlessness of an untiring vitality intent upon its ends. Their education, the same as that of their brothers with whom they were sometimes brought up, was hardly a softening process. But it braced their bodies, and their amazing health was largely owing to their simple external view of life which kept them young and made grief appear a waste of time. Such an attitude was disastrous in many ways. The noblest issues of life were shut to them, their religion was a matter of observance and etiquette. The women of a country are in great measure the indicators of its faith, and had those of Italy been more spiritual, the Reformation might have taken root there. Vittoria Colonna, with her spiritual fervour, her persistent grief for her dead husband, her profound affection for Michael Angelo, was the exception, and she stands out in contrast to the rest of them.

There was Emilia Pia, from whom Shakespeare might have drawn his Beatrice—the life and light of the court at Urbino, "maistresse and ringleader of all the companye so that every manne at her received understandinge and courage"—"Madonna Emilia"

who, as she lay dying, recited passages from *Il Cortegiano*, that record of her happy prime. There were Giulia Gonzaga and the Venetian, Veronica Gambara, the busy goddesses of a daring intellectual coterie; and Marietta Strozzi, with the tip-tilted nose and dancing eyes, who at eighteen broke away from her guardians and lived alone, and had snowball matches by moonlight with all the sparks of Florence; and Olympia Morata, who at sixteen lectured in Ferrara on philosophy, and shone with equal lustre as a critic of poets or a translator of the Bible; yet left her acclaiming country to become the wife of a Lutheran doctor, and died, worn out, in Heidelberg.

The Estes and Gonzagas furnished the most complete types—in Isabella d'Este, wife of Francesco Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, "the first lady of the world," as men called her, and in her sister-in-law, Elisabetta Gonzaga, wife of Duke Guidobaldo of Urbino. Isabella stood for the Renaissance Lady, Elisabetta for Renaissance society. Beatrice d'Este, the wife of Ludovico Sforza, was as representative as her sister, with her gifts and her graces, her missals and jewels and painted clavichords; but she died at twenty-one and only flashed

across the mortal horizon, while Isabella lived to old age, and lived each minute. There is something unreasonably refreshing, and something brutal about her insistent enjoyment, her benevolence and her selfishness, her diplomacy and her density. What woman of another day would send her dwarf as consolation to a heartbroken widower, or bargain with a poverty-stricken artist? Yet she was generous and free from egoism; a splendid Patron in an age of Patrons.

As connoisseur indeed and as collector she stands foremost among these extravagant, fastidious, matter-of-fact lovers of the beautiful. They played the game more artfully than men, using their delicate artillery—their wits and wiles, their good taste and petty passions—to gain their desires. But a game it remained. For although they lived amidst great artists and great traditions of beauty, although Mantegna painted Isabella's "Camera Degli Sposi," while his "Parnassus" and his "Defeat of the Vices" hung in her "Studio" not far from Bellini's glowing canvas and Michael Angelo's "Sleeping Cupid," these ladies were at heart not very different from the rich ladies of today. With a real enthusiasm for art, they

were driven by common human instincts. Isabella's greatest enjoyment was to be different from her neighbours, to possess something they could not get. To her it was unendurable to hear of any rarity without attempting to have it copied. She and Lucrezia Borgia grew sharp in competition over their antiques, and to emulate Isabella's finest piece, Lucrezia bought a modern "Cupid," which she exhibited as an old one. Such a stroke would have qualified her for a dealer, but good dealers make indifferent artists.

Her great friend, Elisabetta Gonzaga, was more truly intellectual and more pensive. She remains as the immortal hostess of Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, that living picture of the literary little court of Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino; the modern hostess, who effaces herself to draw out others, to fuse conflicting elements, to give zest and to restrain. And she was helped by her husband, the subtler version of his great father, Federigo; the delicate Stoic who, crippled by gout at twenty, triumphed over bodily torments through mind and will, and through a kind of native sweetness. His illness, throwing him upon

intellectual interests and the pleasures of good talk, did much to ripen the art of conversation and to make his circle what it was—the flower of civilized Italian society.

That circle was illumined by the wit and the scholarship of Bembo and by the thoughtful urbanity of Castiglione. Bibbiena talked his best for such an audience, and Aretino, the "*unico Aretino*," unique as genius and as scamp, electrified it by his improvisings. Every man or woman of repute in Italy, every traveller of distinction joined it. They made no high-flown experiments, and would have laughed at the six ladies and six gentlemen of Florence who retired to the hills to get seclusion for intellectual discussion and returned less detached than they came. The group of people who gathered round their Duke and Duchess sincerely cared for things of the mind. "It appeared," says Castiglione, "that there was a chaine that kept all lincked together in love in suche wise that there was never agrement of wyll or hearty love greater betweene brethren, than was there betweene us all."

The significance of the little company was deeper than it appeared. It marked another

stage in the growth of social ideals and of the position of women. "With them we had such free and honest conversation that every manne might commune, sit daily and laugh with whom he had lusted. But such was the respect we bore to the Dutchess's will that the self-same liberty was a very great bridle." In those last words is laid the foundation-stone of modern intercourse.

Castiglione was the champion of women, and his book is perhaps the first self-conscious statement of their claims; of the age-worn questions as to what woman should be, whether she should spin or think, what is her true relation to man. Such were the topics discussed by these lords and ladies; and there were others no less involved in their central subject—the fashioning of the perfect Courtier: such minor themes, for instance, as "Some born very asseheds," or "Tumblynge not fit for a gentleman."

Every sort of disputant was there, from the courtly idealist, Giuliano de' Medici, to the ribald Aretino who thought that woman was "a perfect meremaiden." But the enduring laurels were awarded to Bembo and Castiglione; and if more hyperbole was lavished

upon Bembo, it is Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1579) whose charm has outlived them all—Baldassare, born of Gonzaga blood, the chosen friend of Raphael, equally man of the world and man of letters, acclaimed as the perfect gentleman who thought that good breeding implied the absence of pedantry, not only in behaviour but in style. "Style," he said, "is a manner of speache that remaineth after a man hath spoken—the life of the woordes," and he, like Bembo, espoused the cause of the Italian language: "like unto a delicious garden" . . . "even if it be not Tuscan of the purest water." It is not surprising that Castiglione suited Raphael's brush so well that the painter made of Baldassare's portrait one of his great masterpieces. For Baldassare had a Raphaelesque nature; he practised the art of balance so finely that he turned it into harmony. He was the paragon of ambassadors, in Rome, in Spain, in England, whence he brought back the Garter to Guidobaldo. His suavity, his courteous wit and tempered will are alive for us still in the face that Raphael drew—in the kind of brilliant sobriety of the blacks and greys of the picture.

And Castiglione lives also in the great hall of the mountain Palace at Urbino, with its vaulted ceiling and rich chimney-mantel and its doors inlaid with dancing Arts and Sciences. Here the last talk that he records of the noble company took place, that wonderful talk that lasted till dawn—upon Beauty, "spoil of the victorye of the soul"; and upon the senses, "the passage" thereunto; and upon Love sacred and profane, the "meane betwixt thinges heavenlye and earthlye," the spirit whom Bembo invokes in a hymn of ecstasy. Day broke. "Then everie man arose upon his feete with much wonder . . . and not one of them felt any heavinesse of slepe. . . . When the windows then were opened on the side of the Palaice that hath his prospect towards the high top of Mount Catri, they sawe alreadye risen in the East a faire morninge like unto the coleur of roses and all starres voided, saving onely . . . Venus, from which appeered to blowe a sweete blast, that, filling the air with a bytinge cold, began to quicken the tunable notes of the pretty birdes among the hushing woods of the hills at hande. Whereupon they all, taking their leave with

reverence of the Dutchesse, departed toward their lodgings without torche, the light of the day sufficing."

They file before us, a last pageant, doing obeisance to the genius of the Renaissance.

CHAPTER V

THE CYNICS AND THE SWASHBUCKLERS OF THE RENAISSANCE

I. Macchiavelli and The Prince

It seems no far cry from the making of the perfect Courtier to the making of the perfect Prince, but there is a gulf fixed between the minds of the authors who fashioned these types. Baldassare Castiglione was the soul of romance; Niccolo Macchiavelli (1469–1527) was the spirit of cynicism—not of that sore cynicism which comes of disillusion, but of the cheerful inborn sort which takes men at their lowest and makes the best of it. He was the child of the old age of the Renaissance, the worst qualities of which were epitomized in his philosophy. But we must not confound the man with his thought. His thought only summed up the wisdom of current political ideas, the conceptions of men who put prudence in the place of wisdom and sacrificed themselves for self-interest.

His life was better than that of many of his neighbours.

Macchiavelli came of a good, civic Tuscan family, he filled civic posts, he went on embassies at home and abroad; he was an important pioneer as well as an author, for he instituted a National Militia of his countrymen and was the Secretary of its organizing board. When, in 1494, the Medici were expelled from Florence, he held a post in the anti-Medicean Government, and was disgraced on their return (1512). Suspected of conspiracy and imprisoned, he was ere long released and allowed to retire to his farm at Casciano, where, in 1514, he began *The Prince*. To analyze his lessons in statecraft would be to work out all the casuistries of Macchiavellism, that intricate system of engineering which would, if logically carried out, set up the Kingdom of Lucifer—not the fiery rebel of Milton, but Goethe's cold and polished Mephistopheles, the conqueror by indifference. The important point about a man is what he believes, not what he disbelieves. On that his real influence is founded, and Macchiavelli was no exception. He was too much a man of the Renaissance to be wholly negative;

and he had a unique ideal, no inconsistent one. That ideal was Cesare Borgia. In his eyes Cesare embodied success and power, and power was Macchiavelli's God. The policy he evolved in its name survives by virtue of this conviction. Strong empire was his aim for his Prince, the establishment of a dominant State; for this end, all means—vice, crime, cruelty, falsehood—were justifiable, while scruples were but the follies of a milksop. There is even a kind of sincerity in his expressing and regulating the notions by which men were then living. He attempted to form a system of lawlessness which at least provided a code of rules in the place of arbitrary action. No Jesuit could have been more heart-whole in his zeal for man's personal salvation than was Macchiavelli in the pursuit of his object. It was no nascent dream of Liberalism, but the natural outcome of his conception, his need for consolidation and extension, that made him desire a unified Italy. He realized that the fulfilment of this desire could alone make his country into an important force, and in this realization there was unfeigned patriotism. But with a hawk's eyesight, he had no insight, and he could not see that no permanent result

could ever be gained on the motives he provided. He left out the soul. There is, perhaps, no better object lesson in political philosophy than to confront Macchiavelli with Mazzini.

Macchiavelli is generally regarded as the first great exponent of expediency; he gave to unauthorized coin the stamp of the mint—he bade men render unto Cæsar the things that are not Cæsar's. He let fall political maxims that are admirable so long as they are taken ephemerally, not as permanent truth. Yet his main significance for his generation was moral, not political. It lay in the model that he set up for imitation. What could be expected of the age that was nourished upon the example of Cesare Borgia, the perfect Bravo, the artist in murder, whose mind was formed upon stories of the scoundrel gods of Rome and Greece as well as upon those of classic conquerors? The fact that such an ideal was practicable is at once a symptom and a cause. The creed of Macchiavelli is explained by contemporary scamps like Aretino and Cellini; it also helped to mould these sanguine cynics and make them possible to themselves. Macchiavelli evoked a school of men who were at least not the cowards of conscience, a school

that did not die with him; and perhaps his most illustrious disciple, as indifferent and a-moral as himself, was Catherine de' Medici. Such was the effect of *The Prince*. The book was dedicated to Giuliano, Duke of Nemours. It immortalized Cesare Borgia.

Macchiavelli's contribution to literature was better than his contribution to ethics. His rich and lucid prose, discarding the decorations of the Renaissance, only caring to say what there was to say in the most direct manner, marked a stride in the progress of literary methods. And this was an honour he shared with Guicciardini (1482–1540), whose two chief works, the *Istoria d'Italia* (from 1378 onwards) and the *Istoria Fiorentina*, no longer naïf like their predecessors, but fertile in practical reflections, already belong to modern days. Guicciardini, like Macchiavelli, "loved his country better than his own soul," and drew a dividing line between public and private morality. Both these men used the classics as the source from which to illustrate their precepts. The student was, indeed, the better part of Macchiavelli; his love of books dignified his enforced retirement.

"When evening falls," runs one of his

letters, "I go home and enter my writing-room. On the threshold I put off my country habit, filthy with mud and mire, and array myself in royal and courtly garments; thus worthily attired, I make my entrance into the ancient courts of the men of old, where they receive me with love, and where I feed upon that food, which only is my own and for which I was born. I feel no shame in conversing with them and asking them the reasons of their actions. They, moved by their humanity, make answer; for four hours' space I feel no annoyance, forget all care; poverty cannot frighten, nor death appal me—I am carried away to their society."

It was not only the mud of the fields that Macchiavelli threw off in his study.

II. Venice and Pietro Aretino

Venice was the right setting for Pietro Aretino, the jolly prince of ruffians. The conditions of Venice were peculiar to itself and especially fitted to provide him with a copious education for his faculties. For Venice with her own laws, customs, traditions, her boast of exemption from Papal authority,

her trade with the East, and her enormous wealth, which, like her isolating lagoons, fortified her independence, was alike the home of beauty and of licence. The constant contact with Orientals was not without effect on her morals, and the splendour of her debaucheries was unrivalled. It is characteristic that the most intellectual woman in the Venice of Aretino's day was Veronica Franco, the famous courtesan, who, like so many of her compeers, held a court like that of a queen. As far as art went, also, the city stood alone. In other places painting, sculpture, architecture, reached their zenith and then gradually degenerated. But in Venice there were not two stages of the Renaissance, there were two separate Renaissances. And though Bellini, the leader of the first Renaissance, could boast that Giorgione, Titian, Tintoret, the leaders of the second, had studied with him in their youth and that he had schooled their brushes, the fact remains that he did not permanently affect their minds or their styles, and they developed on other lines from him. The two generations kept distinct. There was the nobler time, contemporaneous with the movement elsewhere in Italy, the great period of

the Bellinis and Vivarinis, and of lesser lights like Cima and Catena, when form was infused with faith and such painters as existed—few in comparison with those of other cities—bore witness to the purer public morals of the earlier part of the fifteenth century. There was the season of transition, marked by no other names so eminent as those of Carpaccio and Crivelli, and there was the wonderful flowering time—the burst of a summer that knew no spring—the day which brought forth Giorgione, Titian, Tintoret, Veronese, and their surrounding galaxy—Bonifazio, Palma Vecchio, Pordenone, Previtale and the rest. There was nothing like it for sudden fertility, excepting the circle of Elizabethan poets and dramatists then flourishing in England.

In Venice these great men were of the same time as the decadent artists in the rest of Italy; the external view, the materialism that produced decay elsewhere, struck the note best suited to the sensuous Venetians and drew from them the art that was most truly theirs. The outside of life absorbed their more inward qualities.

They have painted the passionate poetry of the world and the flesh, the emotion of splen-

dour, as it were the soul of the body. And they were the first personal landscape-painters, the first to imbue Nature with passion and, even where she was but a background, to lend her a life of her own. Raphael was the master of space; Piero della Francesca invested tree and mountain with a kind of drama caught from his subject; but the landscape of the Venetians, above all, that of Giorgione, is complete and self-dependent. That, inspired as they were by sky and water, they also stand as the greatest colorists the world had seen, need hardly be reiterated.

It is enlightening to contrast these men of Venice with their Tuscan contemporaries; it brings out the deep difference between the two. For meanwhile in Florence, Andrea del Sarto (1460–1529), "the faultless painter," was making for much the same end with his Madonna del Sacco and his soft, luscious saints and Virgins. But the external view did not suit Florence. Even he failed to wrest from outward show the vital warmth that makes it endure, while his pupils, Pontormo and Bronzino, only rendered its matter-of-factness. And Siena was in like case. Sodoma and his group, discarding the old Sienese mysticism,

replaced it by sentimentality, and became sensational where a Tintoret was dramatic.

It is easier than in the case of other schools to speak of the later Venetians collectively—as easy as to mass together the Greek sculptors of the best period. The words Tuscan and Umbrian cover a far greater wealth of individual thought and fancy. To see as far as possible into the world of sense is a glorious but a simplifying power, and these artists of Venice show uniformity. Yet each has his own peculiar properties. Giorgione, who most intensely sums up the best qualities of all and transcends them, is their poet, their Keats, who plucks the heart of sadness out of beauty. Tintoret was the genius of a great romantic drama; Veronese of a great romantic prose; while Titian was perhaps the most fertile, the best equipped at all points; like Giorgione, the representative of his compeers, but the most proportionate rather than the most fervid.

These great mundane painters made an exciting drama of Biblical subjects. They seldom represented their Holy Families even in a stable, they set them down in large luminous landscapes. Tintoret's "Crucifixion," his "Day of Judgment," are elemental

tragedies; the "Marriage of Cana" is the climax of a love-story; his frescoes in the school of San Rocco are so many acts in a big play. And Veronese is a master of scene-painting. Sublimated fact, the doings of gods and goddesses, the idylls of pleasure in its prime furnish the themes best adapted to them. What can more fitly show their glories than Giorgione's "Pastoral" in the Louvre, with its noontide blaze of youth and love, its piping shepherd and its poignant sense of mortality grafted upon a beauty as simple as that conceived by any Greek? But there is no reminiscence here of Greek philosophy, no Neo-Platonism. And the portraits of Tintoret's doges, or of Titian's nobles, and his ladies with red-gold hair, tell the same tale. No less than the subject pictures do they seem to point to a truth; they go to prove that the peculiar qualities of Venice are most adequately expressed by the art of painting. As we look at them, we understand why Venetian sculpture reached no pre-eminence—why the marbles of the Sansovinos leave us cold, and the only important work in Venice is the Tuscan Verrocchio's equestrian statue of Colleoni.

The free use of the senses which evoked such admirable æsthetics could not be so successful in conduct; it lent itself to licence and corruption. It was the natural parent of Pietro Aretino, scoundrel, good soul, genius, writer, improvisatore, tavern brawler, fine gentleman; the master of eloquence, the soul of dishonour, whose fascinations were so compelling that they made Michael Angelo a suppliant for his kindness and Titian his intimate friend; whose crimes were so notorious that when Tintoret was painting his portrait, he took his measurements with an admonitory cutlass for a mahlstick. When we ask why these choice spirits courted him, and why, what is still more remarkable, Elisabetta fêted him at Urbino, there is one answer, and that is, "greatness." He was a complete type—a scamp in the grand style; he had the fiery force of genius. And his wit was irresistible. "Nature, of whose simplicity I am the secretary, dictates," he says, "that which I set down." Did he help Shakespeare to create Falstaff? He may at all events have been the progenitor of future Scapins and Figaros. He was also, instinctively, an artist. After watching a sunset

over Venice—"I," he wrote to Titian, "who know that your pencil is the spirit of her inmost soul, cried aloud, 'Oh, Titian, where are you now?'"

His birth, at Arezzo, was like himself. The son of a noble and of a woman of the streets, he was "born," as he says, "in a hospital, with the spirit of a king." He began life as a bookbinder at Perugia—the one respectable moment in his career—and after that he was most things, a monk, a footman, a grand Signor, toadied by ambassadors and kings Charles V wished to knight him and there was talk of getting him a Cardinal's hat, for which his real flair for art, or his denunciation of "that arch-pedant Luther" would about equally have fitted him. It is a comfort to know that the English Ambassador at Venice thrashed him; otherwise he prospered to the end, and died, says tradition, whilst laughing at an indecent joke.

III. Benvenuto Cellini

Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1572) belonged to the same race of swashbucklers. But Benvenuto was always a unique artist and never

even temporarily, a gentleman, nor could he have figured in the conversational circle at Urbino. His career lay mainly in Rome, but his greatest triumph was at Florence.

"Now as it pleased my glorious Lord, the immortal God," he wrote, "I brought the Perseus at last to its end; and on Thursday morning, I showed it openly to the whole city. No sooner had I removed the screen, though the sun was barely risen, than a great number of people gathered round, and all with one voice strove who should laud it highest. The Duke stood at one of the lower windows of the Palace . . . and there, half-hidden . . . he heard every word said about the statue."

This was the public to which Benvenuto was accustomed. We of to-day are not so much excited about him, yet his elegant, highly accomplished Perseus still displays its graces on the Loggia dei Lanzi, and still proves the goldsmith-sculptor, Cellini, a sovereign in his own province. His was a small art, revelling in details—the art of decadence which yet kept the enjoyment of the prime. This is the attraction of nearly all his work; of his figures, his jewels, his golden salt-cellars

formed of Neptunes, Nereids, dolphins, or his richly carved ciboria. Cellini knew how to dominate his detail, he was the master-craftsman of ornament; and although he had more ingenuity than imagination, more resource than strength, he did not let art degenerate into artifice. Nor did he repeat himself. His fertility was incredible; even he could not have exaggerated it.

The most enduring monument of himself is his amazing autobiography, the frankest and most mendacious of histories. Benvenuto, like Aretino, was "Nature's secretary," but much more of a writer than was Pietro. He takes up his indefatigable brush and with vivid splashes of colour paints for us, first a portrait of himself, a good deal larger than life-size, and then broad adventurous pictures of every one he has met, from Michael Angelo and Clement VII to the wayside tramp, and the fat French judge before whom he came in Paris. Seldom has there been such a braggadocio. If Aretino is the prince of ruffians, Benvenuto is the prince of liars. He lies royally, generously, for the joy of lying. His lies, like his work, are rich in ingenuity and design, in arabesques and flourishes. He

brawled, he cheated, he murdered—not quite so many men as he believed. But he was bad enough. To have fired the shot which (so he says) killed the Connétable de Bourbon in the sack of Rome, was perhaps the best deed of his existence. Yet he almost wrote himself down a saint. A halo, he tells us, only visible at morning and evening, appeared round his head. When he escaped from the hands of justice, it proved to him that God was on his side, and it is surprising that his record does not end with an account of his ascent to heaven in a chariot of fire which he could have made much better than Providence. But weightier heads than his would have been turned by the flattery bestowed upon him. Kings and pontiffs said they could not live without him and sued for his favour. The adulation of Francis I for this bellicose favourite knew no bounds, and the calmest days in Cellini's annals are perhaps those he spent in quarrels and hard work in that castle of the Petit-Nesle where he evoked his Diane de Poitiers—a courtier's compliment in bronze to the reigning Diane. He alarmed no one and amused all, and his book lives, as he did, because it is human.

That is why it charmed such different men as Horace Walpole and Lamartine, why Schiller loved it and Goethe translated it. It is as extravagant in its merry Renaissance brutality as Rousseau's *Confessions* are extravagant in their eighteenth-century sensibility; and for vainglory and completeness of self-exposure it can only be compared to Jean Jacques' pages. Yet the two works are the opposite of one another. Benvenuto does not know what introspection means, and that is why he carries us along: like a high wind, making havoc—violent, but not unhealthy.

Nevertheless, he stood on the downhill slope. His copious means were greater than his ends. His art showed no ideal, not even one of physical beauty such as glorified Venice; it had no outlook and no future.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRUITS OF THE RENAISSANCE

AFTER 1550 the Renaissance in Italy ceased to be a movement forwards, even in Venice, the last place where it lingered. Its youngest artist was Correggio, whose frolicking cupids at Parma on the inappropriate ceiling of a convent prove him to be a decorator of the first order; whose wonderful power of chiaroscuro proves him to be a great virtuoso. But his effects already tend towards being over-effective; his Virgins in strong lights amidst strong shadows are almost melodramatic; his soft downy bloom on flesh and draperies is little short of a trick. No less was Andrea del Sarto marred by the element of the virtuoso; while men like Raphael's pupil, Giulio Romano, painter and architect, were mere reproducers, living by exaggeration and making capital out of other men's genius.

Beside these forerunners of the end there were other artists who lived in the Renaissance

but were not altogether of it: people like Bandello, the story-teller, the writer of *Novelle*, who happened to reach his zenith in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, but who might have flourished at any period. His craft was but an embodiment of a popular demand that has always existed, whether in the days of the heroes, or in those of chivalry. It is true that the Decameron—a work so much greater and more beautiful than its successors—gave a model to these narrators, and that the Renaissance lent their instinct the form of art, but the spirit of Bandello's craft, its racy shrewdness and broad disillusioned wit belong to the Italy of all times, the Italy which produced that paradoxical fruit of the Latin races—cynical Romance.

In poetry also there was romance without idealism; in literature, as in painting, there was beauty without glory. Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533) was, in some measure, the Correggio of letters; he had the pen of a great decorator. Essentially the laureate of courts, he was no less the complete self-conscious artist in the modern sense of the word, hyper-sensitive, æsthetic, sophisticated. It is on the surface of

the movement, through his luscious imagery, his embroideries in words, his chiselled use of style, that Ariosto makes part of the Renaissance. In his *Orlando Furioso*, his re-creation of the old tale of chivalry, of knights and maids Christian and Paynim, of Charlemagne and Orlando and Angelica, Ruggiero and Bradamante, he invented what has been called the Romantic Epic, or, rather, he continued with genius the narrative that the cruder Boiardo had begun. Romantic it is, on the outside, in a fashion not so remote from that of Bandello. Ariosto's men and women no more move our feelings than the figures in rich old tapestries, which were not evoked, we know, spontaneously, but were elaborately stitched in colours that charm the eye. Ariosto, like Spenser, used the stage trappings of Romance, its magic and its monsters, but he did not lift them to the plane of imagination by any fantastic thought or Platonic allegory such as inspired the *Faerie Queene*. In some ways—in his strange mixture of satire and grandiloquence, in his simple perception of sensuous beauty—Ariosto, allowing for difference of century, is more comparable to Byron than to Spenser.

His poem, however, had purposes equally foreign to both. It is a tissue of flattery of the Este family, whose forbears he celebrates in the guise of these legendary characters.

No man had a greater contemporary reputation. His plays, so much admired by Leo X, contributed to it, and when Alfonso d'Este, Lucrezia Borgia's husband, set up his theatre in 1532, Ariosto superintended its management. His success is the more interesting, because life had early brought him hardship, and, sedentary man of letters as he was, he had been forced into struggle with realities. At twenty-six he was left without means, the protector of nine brothers and sisters. He entered the employ of Ippolito d'Este, and apparently remained honest, refusing a lucrative career in the Church because he felt no vocation for it. He fulfilled several political missions, but the best of his energies were given to *Orlando Furioso*, which, with his thirst for perfection, he took ten years to write and sixteen more to polish. It was finished in 1515, while he was still with Ippolito. In 1518, he changed masters and sought the service of Alfonso d'Este, at whose court in Ferrara he lived, a

cherished Apollo, revising his poems, educating his son, prospering till his death.

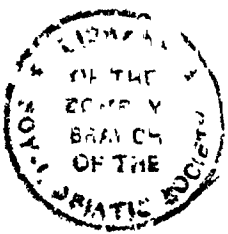
Ariosto was the last literary representative of the Renaissance. His successor, Bernardo Tasso (1544–1594), died, it is true, before 1600, but his *Rinaldo*, written at eighteen, and his *Gerusalemme Liberata*, at thirty, with their noble sentiments and religious tendency, had already travelled far from the movement, and he no more belonged to it than would Schiller have done, had he lived then.

There are others who are rather the descendants than the children of the Renaissance—first among them, Giordano Bruno (1548–1600), the heretical Dominican, who repudiated the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity; who condemned the use Christ made of miracles, and dimly foreshadowed the tenets of evolution; who pronounced this world to be only one out of an infinite number and first conceived of it as set in boundless ether; who said the Universe was a Being, and reconciled science with God, matter with spirit. At once ribald and reverent, he might with some reason be called the son of the Reformation, although he did

not care about Luther and, while he believed in no Church, preferred that of Catholicism to the rest. He himself endures more vividly than the books which embody him—his *De Umbris Idearum*, *De Nomade*, *De Triplice*, *Della Causa*, *Del Infinito Universo*. But it is his visit to England and to Oxford, his record of his supper with Fulke Greville in his *Cena Ceneri*, and its dedication to Sidney, which give him a place in the picture. His death at the stake in 1600 symbolizes the birth of the future, not the death of the past.

For, as far as Italy was concerned, the past was dead, or dying. In art, in literature, in life, there was an absence of what is big, and in its place there was excess. Outline was smothered in detail, there was over-expression, sensationalism; there were sprawling figures and violent attitudes. Yet nothing that has lived can live in vain. From the chaotic decay of the great creative period came forth, at first unrecognized, the new-born spirit of the modern world—the spirit of criticism and of science. And, in a lesser fashion, the torch of knowledge was passed

on at once to other countries. Though the life of the Renaissance in Italy was over, she helped it to prosper elsewhere. For Germany, like herself, its day was done, but England and France took up the tale.



CHAPTER VII

THE RENAISSANCE OF THE NORTHERN RACES

Out of the Italian Renaissance there issued a new-born art; out of the Northern Renaissance there came forth a new-born religion. There came forth also a great school of poetry, and a drama the greatest that the world had seen since the days of Greece. The religion was the offspring of Germany, the drama and the poetry that of England.

There was thus, one might almost say, a gulf fixed between the Renaissance of the Northern peoples and that of the Latins in Italy whence the North drew its sustenance; and in the end Germany arose and with the sword of the Reformation slew the Mother-Renaissance. This is significant. Wherever the Renaissance broke with religion it ceased to live on as a direct movement. And in Italy, France and Spain, where modern Paganism, the Inquisition, the wars of Religion alike helped

to corrupt and to arrest it, the Renaissance itself was exterminated even while it continued to work. But in the Teuton countries, in England and Germany, which in those days comprised the Netherlands and much of Switzerland, the Renaissance was carried straight forward, through the channels of religion on the one hand and of a great romantic drama on the other. Luther, no less than Shakespeare, was the child of the new ideas, of the cult of Nature and of Unity. And even when the later followers of the Reformation, the English Puritans, arose and made war against beauty, their cause was merged in political issues, and English freedom was too strong for it. The ultimate expression of puritanism was Milton, who was equally the child of the Renaissance.

The Revival of Learning in Germany is sufficiently distinguished from that of Italy when we realize that among its principal sources was Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471). There gathered round that great mystic a group of devout scholars, apostles alike of knowledge and of Christianity, and one of them, Rudolph Agricola, earliest of Teutonic Humanists, was the first man of

erudition to recognize the schoolboy Erasmus. Erasmus, the sovereign of the Northern Renaissance, was thus, as it were, the grandchild of Thomas à Kempis. Nor did these pioneers spring out of nothing. The German gift for the science of education is of long date, and, in the fourteenth century, the Schools of the Christian Brethren founded a tradition of wide culture as well as of piety. The contemporary Petrarch was not without effect upon this search after learning, but he did not initiate it. And Æneas Sylvius, when he came to Germany, brought with him the influence of Italy with lasting results; but he, also, only gave new life and new colour to what was there, witnessing further that the German Renaissance did not derive from Italy.

In one sense, indeed, it may be said that there was no Renaissance in Germany. The movement there was almost entirely intellectual. It showed no pagan joy and pride; it could boast no Patrons excepting a handful of potentates and burghers: the poetizing Emperor Maximilian, the Elector Frederick of Saxony, Albert, Archbishop of Mainz, the wealthy Fuggers, the literary Pirkheimer; and

its sense of beauty—the simple outward sense —was secondary, often non-existent. The beauty of German art is chiefly abstract—a beauty of idea. The Virgins of Van Eyck and Albrecht Dürer are distinguished more by majesty than by beauty; a kind of metaphysical fancy rather than any sensuous perception stamps the rest of Dürer's work and that of his contemporaries. And outside painting, the range of the arts was limited. Architecture represented little more than a prolongation of the Gothic style; while Teutonic sculpture could show few names compared to the numbers in Italy. Thus also with individuals. Even Erasmus, more finely strung than the other Northern Humanists, seems to lack æsthetic faculties. The art of Rome, of Raphael and Michael Angelo, left him apparently unaffected. He could not bear Church music. "In college or monastery it is still the same: music, nothing but music," he wrote—"there was no music in St. Paul's time. Money must be raised to buy organs, when poor starving creatures might be fed at the cost of them." And again: "My fear is that with the revival of Greek literature, there may be a revival of Paganism." He

and his compatriots were, in fact, not only devoid of the pagan spirit, they were preoccupied with something else.

This preoccupation was Christianity; not the half-philosophical, half-fantastic Christianity of a Ficino, but a plain, evangelical piety which aimed at the restoration of primitive apostolic sincerity. When Erasmus and Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, took their walks together in London, their main subject of conversation "was Christ," as Erasmus relates—a very different theme from the topics chosen by the Bembos and Bibbienas. And when, in 1516, Erasmus published his Latin translation of the Greek Testament, the first version from the Greek, the public was more prepared than has been supposed, for there had appeared at close intervals, from 1470 onwards, no less than fourteen translations of the Bible into High and Low German. Erasmus' rendering of the Gospels was an epoch for the world; it was a literary piece of work, attractive to readers of refinement, while his comments, pointing with subtle irony to the contrast between the precepts of Christ and the practice of the Church, were strokes of genius compelling men to listen. He was the voice, but

he was not the pioneer. Others less gifted had tried to meet the need they saw; he alone gave enduring form to his endeavour.

The attempt to revive primitive Christianity made one corner-stone of German Humanism, and the hatred of the monks made the other. Here again the pen of Erasmus, the salt of his wit, did what nothing else had done, and his barbed laugh pierced more effectually than any soldier's sword. He and the less delicate Ulrich von Hutten effectually forged that great weapon of the German movement, serious satire, the art which was their great contribution to the Renaissance. It was mainly directed against the prelates and the friars. Erasmus, the enfranchized Dominican, was well versed in his subject.

The art of satire involves taste; and taste, the element imported into learning by Erasmus and his colleagues, was the link between Italy and Germany. But taste brought its weaknesses with it. It took up too much room, and it came to substitute conviction of folly for conviction of sin. Conviction of folly engenders criticism, not action. Erasmus, Von Hutten, Colet, prepared men's minds for the Reformation, they could not make it. It

is conviction of sin which produces deed, and when that conviction took shape it meant Luther on the one hand, and the martyrdom of Thomas More upon the other. Luther produced results beyond his ken. The conviction of sin was the death-blow to the Renaissance.

Such, roughly speaking, were the features of the German Revival. Religious thought and the power of analysis were the final fruits it added to the European harvest. England, for her part, as we have seen, brought with her a sheaf of redder gold—her drama and her poetry. In England, for good or for ill, the strongest element is the moral one; and drama and poetry, more than other forms of art, seem to make a debatable land where force and beauty, morals and emotions meet, whether for tragic conflict, or for the contrasts of comedy, or to be fused into one in the flame of lyric intensity. France, in her turn, put forth her own qualities—her genius for criticism of art and life; her graceful invention never too great to be useful, which built *châteaux* and planned gardens; her exquisite sense of form which produced the finished poetry of the Pleïade; her practical philo-

sophy, gay and sceptical, which found expression in Rabelais and Montaigne.

Space fails us to dwell longer upon the individual gifts contributed by the Northern countries to the world of new ideas. The Humanists, we must repeat, were in themselves a nation, abolishing nationality, with Latin as their common tongue and intellectual free-trade as their privilege. In this way Erasmus, More, Colet, Reuchlin, fall naturally into the same group, and so do the Northern artists who interpreted the thought of the day; while the thinkers, Rabelais, Montaigne, and their foster-child, Bacon, make another interrelated circle, bound by some threads to Erasmus and his school and by others to the fatherlands which bore them. The poetry of England and of France must be kept for a separate chapter.

The interpretation of ideas in the North, as in the South, began with art. In sculpture, if not in other ways, the forerunners of the German Renaissance were as striking as their Italian counterparts. The carved Virgins and Sybils and Saints, the portrait-statues and allegorical figures of Bamberg and Strassburg, Freiberg and Halberstadt, between 1225 and

1270, amaze us by their naturalism and their mastery, and by a beauty which far surpasses that realized by later workmen. For the most part their creators have left no name; no German Pisano founded a school among them; and in spite of certain general resemblances, each town developed its own qualities. The first art to bring the North into wide reputation was the painting of Flanders. Enriched by the rule of Burgundian Dukes and encouraged by their patronage, that country was a natural school for artists. It rapidly produced men of a technique so extraordinary and of such a deep knowledge of processes that they inspired envy even in Italy—apart from the discovery of oils generally ascribed to them.

Here Jan Van Eyck (after 1380–1440), aided by his elder brother, Hubert, gave the world a new revelation in his mighty picture, "The Adoration of the Lamb." Both were inaugurators, and they were followed by Roger Van der Weyden, who was at his prime in the first half of the fifteenth century (*d.* 1464); by Hans Memling (1430–1495), who worked in the second; by his contemporaries, Hugo Van der Goes and Antonello da Messina; and later, by Dierck Bouts and Gerard David (1484–

1523), by Mabuse, Lucas van der Leyden, and Van Orley; greater than these last, by Quentin Matsys (1460–1531). At the same time as the earlier among these painters, from 1425 onwards, there flourished in the region of the Upper Rhine the School of Cologne, with its Masters of the Great and Lesser Passion, of the Life and Family of the Virgin, artists more homely than the Flemings. All were alike distinguished by the Gospel piety, the simple-hearted, literal realism which contrasts so strongly with the mystical fancy, the symbolic grace, the imaginative ritual of Italy. The human and practical side of religion was what these men cared for. In spite of the orthodox Catholic dogma that their canvases expressed, they seem to have borne in them the unconscious seeds of Protestantism. A glorious fidelity is their note, and this devotion to reality could never degenerate into materialism; it was raised by reverence and dignified by humility. To them nothing was too small or too large for infinite labour, whether it were a marvellously painted tear upon the cheek of an ugly, sorrow-stricken Magdalen, or a minute wrinkle in an opulent old burgher's face, or the sky and greensward in Van Eyck's

"Adoration of the Lamb." But the tear is more characteristic than the greensward. In spite of the glow and radiance of that great picture, or of the jewelled innocence and happiness of Memling's musician-angels, or of the serenity of David's saints, sadness rather than gladness is the characteristic of Flemish artists. The struggle and grief of the North are in them, together with its conscience; their very Queens of Heaven are sombre, and no brushes are more vivid than theirs in the rendering of woe. Their contribution to art is not poetry, it is a noble prose—a prose which was suited both to the Humanists and the Reformers.

It made no unfitting background for Erasmus, their spiritual descendant and their colleague. They and the earliest Humanists—Johann Müller (or Reggiomontanus), Bessarion's pupil in Greek and a great astronomer; Peuerbach, his master in science; Agricola, the scholar in Hebrew, Latin, medicine; Wympherling, the Vittorino of Germany, had already died, or were near ending, when Erasmus grew up. Desiderius Erasmus (1467–1536) is so well known to us as Holbein's furred and gowned scholar with

the half-smile of playful irony, that it is hard to think of him as the mutinous, helpless orphan, forced and wheedled by a wicked guardian into a monastery, tied by vows before he knew where he was, without vocation and without means of escape.

Under the circumstances he did the best he could for himself in accepting the only exit possible, the rather undignified post of secretary to the Bishop of Cambrai. This meant travel and a permanent patron, and presently the Bishop fulfilled the young man's wish and sent him to the University of Paris. By unremitting toil, which cost him his health, he had already made himself a man of learning. But he had been trammelled—Greek was still suspected in Holland as savouring of heresy. In Paris he was free to pursue knowledge. Yet here again Erasmus is hardly like his portrait. The young Dominican monk lived a life of letters, of light loves and pleasure, in the Bohemia of the moment. He did not come into his own, intellectually speaking, until, when close on thirty, he went to England at Lord Mountjoy's invitation, and proved himself—what he was by nature—a literary man of the world. In England as in Paris

his personal charm bewitched men and made friends for him wherever he went. His absence produced a blank. "His return," wrote a comrade, was "recovering what was part of our souls, however torn he was and battered." His faults and his grumblings about unkind patrons and stingy comrades, in face of the large sums showered on him, count for nothing; they were but the clouds of sick and fastidious nerves needing luxury and freedom from care. The real Erasmus was he who became the intimate of Sir Thomas More and Dean Colet.

England had made a stride in the acquisition of culture. It was but some fifty years since the scholar, Poggio, came to visit Cardinal Beaufort and was shocked at the barbarism he found—the gluttonous meals, four hours long, the neglect of learning. But when Erasmus arrived the young King, Henry VIII, had begun his reign with an announcement that he thought learning the thing best worth living for. The teaching of Greek was beginning, although most Greek students still went abroad to master it and Cambridge lacked Greek scholarship until Erasmus came to lecture there. The study of Latin and of

Letters had made quicker progress. Colet was far famed as a Latinist and a lecturer, and hardly less known were the lectures of Grocyn and Linacre, the King's physician, both of whom had sat under Poliziano at Florence, and brought Italian memories to England. These, together with Thomas More, man of letters and of affairs, made as choice a company as the Renaissance could produce. If that movement came slowly in England, it came seriously, purged of its grosser elements, and these its votaries were spiritual men even in their brilliance, disliking licence as much as they disliked narrowness. Brilliant they were, and the Symposium at Oxford at which Colet and Erasmus discussed the characters of Cain and Abel, and Erasmus improvised his vivid legend of Cain's corruption of the sentry at the gate of Eden, was a different kind of feast from that described by Poggio.

Erasmus had the genius for friendship. His name became inseparable from the names of More and Colet. "To admire is to imitate," he said, and, with regard to each other, all three men practised this precept.

If Erasmus, as accomplished in the hunting-field as in the study, was the most dazzling of

the trio, More was, in body, mind and spirit, the most attractive : as merry as he was holy, witty without unkindness, kind without insipidity, fascinating without vanity, the St. Francis of the Renaissance to whom flocked all living creatures, not forgetting the birds of "Chelsey" who fed daily from his hand. "He is wise with the wise and jests with fools," writes Erasmus . . . "his talk is full of fun but never scurrilous . . . he can make fun of anything." More's eyes, he tells us, were "grey with black spots," of the kind then supposed in England to mean genius, his hair "shot black and yellow," his face pale, his strong hands the "only sign of rusticity." In his youth he had meant to be a priest, had prepared for the Church with fast and vigil; but he fell deeply in love and, seeing where lay true purity, he gave up orders for marriage. And he made the most faithful of husbands, although, faithful also to the Renaissance, he wrote a treatise in defence of Plato's theory of community of wives. Home life suited him. He loved children, he loved music, he hated courts and quarrels, and did his best to escape the attentions of the King. But he did not succeed. Favour was

poured upon him until he finally reached the Chancellorship.

Colet was soberer, less many-sided—by set intention as well as by nature. Tall and handsome, a cultivated traveller in France and Italy, he was not born pious. "He was," says Erasmus, "naturally hot and resentful, indolent, fond of pleasure and of women's society, disposed to make a joke of everything. He told me that he had fought against his faults with fast and prayer. . . . Not but what you could see traces of the old Adam, when wit was flying at feast or festival. He avoided large parties for this reason." But he made an art of friendship; conversation was meat and drink to him. And he was racy, even in his religion. The Schoolmen he hated, and chief among them, Aquinas, who "would not (he said) have laid down the law as boldly on all things in heaven and earth if he had not been an arrogant fool." He had a particular dislike of Bishops and he thought that priestly avarice and arrogance were "worse than a hundred concubines," envy and ignorance than unchastity. Many accepted doctrines he owned that he did not believe, "but he would not create scandal," says Erasmus,

"by blurting out his objections." His faith took more practical forms than controversy. All his best powers were given to the young—to the great School of St. Paul's that he founded. His entire fortune went to it. He made it a centre of enlightenment and he set it on a business basis, characteristically appointing married laymen as trustees because they had more conscience than clerics.

Both he and Erasmus looked upon teaching as the highest of callings. To a Cambridge pedagogue who disparaged his profession, Erasmus replied that Christ had not despised children; that no one could do better than bring the little ones to Him. All three men were united by a common, an absorbing aim—the revival of Christ's Christianity in the Church. "Nothing," wrote Erasmus, "is worse than relaxed religion," words that rang in the Reformation. The moment seemed propitious, for King Henry, at the outset of life, appeared to be the leader of these adventurers and inspired by the same purpose. "It is," he said, "my earnest wish to restore Christ's religion to its primitive purity . . . you and we together with our joint counsel and resources will build again the Gospel of

Christ." Men were concerned with the subject. More's lectures on Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, and those of Colet upon St. Paul's Epistles drew crowds. Curiosity about the Scriptures was in the air, and the great wish of Erasmus was to see them in the hands of every man. "I long," he said, "that the husbandman should sing them to himself as he follows the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with them the weariness of his journey."

He was perhaps the first man to take a literary pleasure in the Bible, and his taste, like his conviction, found the right channel for expression. In 1516, he published his Latin translation of the New Testament together with his comments—the book which illumined a public hitherto accustomed to chanted Gospels. Before Erasmus achieved this big critical task, he had undergone many vicissitudes, travelling from France to Rome and Holland, and back to England, to which he paid four or five more visits. He had also printed his *Adagia*—a collection of quotations from the Ancients, with his comments—and his *Colloquia*, discourses on current questions,

both of which achieved immense popularity. They were followed by his translation of *St. Jerome's Letters*, which, as a picture of Early Christian life, he intended as a supplement to his Testament; and by his scintillating satire on the Church and on officialdom, *Encomium Moriæ* (*The Praise of Folly*), the fruit of his talks at Chelsea with Thomas More, to whom the book, with its punning title, was dedicated. "Will religion vanish if I ridicule superstition?" asked Erasmus, and his blade of scorn flew out against ignorance and credulity.

He made the Reformation inevitable, yet his gift was for opening windows, not for building, and when Luther refused to repair a crumbling edifice and began to construct a new one, Erasmus resisted. The monks said that he had laid the egg and Luther had hatched it. "Yes," said Erasmus, "but the egg I laid was a hen, and Luther hatched a gamecock." Much of his remaining time was spent in trying to counteract the gamecock, but those were not his most productive moments. He was best when he was at his ease, and it was in England that his spirit felt at home. The King and the Primate,

Warham, Erasmus' princely friend, offered him every inducement of place and money to continue with them, but his restless soul liked to be moving and saw happiness wherever he was not. His body too quickly wore out and he died in 1536, before he was sixty. A year before, More had gone to the scaffold, impelled to a heroism of which Erasmus' critical mind would have been incapable.

Meanwhile, other blades had flashed forth in Germany in the same cause as his, chief among them those of Reuchlin, the Humanist, and of Ulrich von Hutten. Reuchlin (1455–1522), who had studied Greek in Paris and had heard Agyropulos in Rome, determined to devote his powers to the Hebrew language, as a key to a scholarly understanding of the Old Testament; also of the Cabala—then reverenced as the authentic oracle of Jewish tradition, and only long after proved to be a mere invention of the thirteenth century. He became the lover, the defender of Hebrew, compiled a Grammar and a lexicon, and wrote pamphlets. But these were not his real contribution to enlightenment. In 1509, Pfefferkorn, a converted Jew and a *parvenu* in Church doctrine, tried to persuade Maximilian

to suppress all Hebrew books except the Bible. The Emperor consulted Reuchlin, who vehemently opposed the measure. Pfefferkorn vindictively denounced him as a foe of orthodoxy, so did the Dominicans of Cologne. He was persecuted, tried, acquitted, and afterwards condemned, but without results. Maximilian and Leo were both, at heart, of his opinion. But the issue at stake was larger than Reuchlin's personal fate. The German Humanists threw down the gauntlet for the Jews and for religious toleration. Battle raged and the victory seemed doubtful, till, in 1514, there appeared the first volume of the mordant *Epistolæ obscurorum Virorum*, by an author little known; followed two years later by a second—the part that has endured—from the pen of Ulrich von Hutten. It was a cutting satire on pedants and bigots, a master-stroke dealt on the side of Reuchlin; the world laughed, and the field was won. Ulrich's wit was too crude for the palate of Erasmus, but the broader and warmer More delighted in it. Reuchlin's triumph gave a fresh impulse to the growing zeal for Biblical criticism and to the search after knowledge.

One of those most keen in this search was

Philip Melancthon (1497–1560), hailed by Erasmus as the rising light of classical learning and, at his prompting, appointed to the Greek Chair at Wittenberg. Here he characteristically lectured both on the Epistle to Titus and on Homer, seeking, as he said, from that poet "Tyrian brass and gems to adorn God's temple"—inciting his beloved Martin Luther, his elder by fourteen years, to the study of Greek. And here he himself turned more and more towards the doctrines of the Reformation and made friendships with men of a like mind. Among them was Albrecht Dürer of Nürnberg.

Never did a movement find such an interpreter as the Reformation found in Dürer (1471–1525). "Oh, Erasmus of Rotterdam, where wilt thou tarry? Hear, Christian Knight, ride forth with the Lord Jesus, defend the right, obtain the martyr's crown!" Thus wrote Dürer, and, as we read, his Knight on the white horse, engraven as he only could engrave, rises before our eyes. "Thou art an old mannikin," he goes on—reminding Erasmus that his hour-glass was running out—"dedicate these years to the cause of the Gospel." To Martin Luther, "the Spirit-

enlightened one, the follower of the true Christian faith," he gave a feeling very near worship. He sent him drawings, he "longed for a greeting," and when Luther was treacherously imprisoned Dürer was broken-hearted. But he only regarded Luther's tenets as a purified form of the old religion, a return to Christ, and the entries in his journal of payments to his Confessor prove that formally he remained a Catholic. He was more prone to see points of union than points of difference, like Michael Angelo, whom in other ways he resembles: in his simple piety, his philosophical intellect, his profound humility, if not in the stormy power of suffering. Family love—he was one of eighteen children—was as strong in him as his faith. To his father, the God-fearing old goldsmith, he gave devotion; his mother he took to live with him and tended her to the end. All the best German qualities accompanied his genius; the citizens of Nürnberg adored him: "Albrecht, my soul's better part," Wilibald Pirkheimer, patron, writer, reformer, once called him.

His gifts showed themselves in childhood and he was early apprenticed to the painter, Michael Wohlgemuth of Nürnberg, who, to-

gether with Martin Schongauer, was then the best-known master of painting. From that time onwards, his outward life as an artist is a record of marvellous progress and incredible industry, of travel, of two or three journeys in mid-life to Venice and another in 1520 to the Netherlands—a record, too, wherever he went, of triumphant success. Raphael wrote him pages of adulation; Bellini became his intimate friend; in Brussels he learned to know Matsys and Van der Leyden, he visited Erasmus. As an engraver of wood and copper he was incomparable; his scheme of fortification is still used in Germany; and his vast project of an Encyclopædia of art for the young, for which he wrote 150 treatises, most of which have perished, would alone have been the work of a lifetime.

But it is his pencil which makes him immortal. Its output seemed endless, and all that he drew, painted or engraved is stamped with the same impress, that of deep-hearted thought, grave, almost sad, rejoicing more in the works of God than in those of man, yet full of love and pity: thought sometimes driven by the study of lavish Nature into elaborate fancy. His "Melancholia," seated

impotent in her might, rugged, beyond beauty yet possessing it, is the completest epitome of Dürer's powers, with her useless wings and her useless crown of laurel, the tired Love drooping at her side, and all around her every tool of art and science, every symbol of man's faculties, except those of a faith which alone could quicken the will to use them—a draughtsman's pendant in brief to a Shakespeare's Hamlet. A like fervent intellect penetrates the remaining "Complexions," the Sanguine and the Contemplative; or the same subject treated in the guise of the Apostles; or his Virgins; or the "Great" and the "Little Passion," and the "Green Passion"; or the "Prodigal Son"; or the studies of wings and plants and beasts.

"Their wealth of fancy," he writes of painters, "was common to them and to God." And again: "Never imagine that you can do, or desire to do, something better than what God has given His created being the power to do, for his capacity is powerless against the creative power of God." Man need never ascribe results to himself, for first he imitates Nature, the one and only mistress, and "then it is no more called his

own, but has become art." Dürer's humility is not of the Renaissance. "The many see more than one, possible as it may be that, for once, one man sees more than a thousand," —so he says, unconscious that his words sweep away the whole of second-rate art. But when that "one man" is found, "the collected and secret treasure of the heart becomes manifest through the work, and the new creature which is created in the heart is the form of a thing." To that form Dürer was always loyal, even at the expense of outward attractions. His was the cult of the idea. "That cannot be painted," said Pirkheimer, speaking of the Last Supper. "It should not be *thought*," replied Dürer, and the awe which inspired his answer is perhaps the best measure of his greatness.

German art is, as it were, the child born of philosophy and of fairy-tale. Both elements mark the groups of fantastic, literal painters, each of them native to its own city, for every free town boasted its individual school of artists, as of scholars. Chief among these towns ranked Nürnberg and Augsburg, and first among Augsburg Masters, in Dürer's day, ranked Altdorfer (between 1480 and 1488–1538)

—Albrecht Altdorfer, painter of magic forests, of strange Knights and of Fauns, of Death and the lovers, also of that "Battle of Arbela," now in Munich, which was once the treasure of Napoleon's bathroom. Like Dürer, Altdorfer was a Reformer, and almost the only detail we know concerning him is that he refused to pay for Masses for his soul, but left instead a precious goblet, his wedding-gift to his wife, to be sold for the poor. And there is Cranach, another Lutheran (1472–1553), yet the least sober, the most fleshly of the Germans, with his coquettish Eves, and his "Land of Cocagne," and his ornate golden "Fountain of Youth," to which rows of lords and ladies, slashed and doubleted, are repairing to win back their prime. Even in Hans Holbein (1497–1543), most famous for his rich, reflective portraits, we find a kindred power over fact and fiction in his "Dance of Death" at Basel.

German sculpture takes no different direction. The same note is always struck: whether it is in the Knights of legend, and the Saints like long-haired princesses from the hand of the Suabian Riemenschneider (1461–1531); or in the works in stone and

wood of the earlier school of Nürnberg, in their fountains, shrines and stations—in the statues of Peter Vischer and Veit Stoss; above all, in the homely, passionate piety of Adam Kraft (1443–1507), the sculptor of the history of the Cross and the Entombment.

Their art was the art of burgherdom, of a refined democracy. It merged—it ended—in the Reformation.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THINKERS OF THE NORTHERN RENAISSANCE

ERASMUS was the finest critic produced by the Renaissance; Rabelais was its richest and warmest thinker, and his thought was the great contribution that France made to the movement. He was one of a trio of towering geniuses; Montaigne and Bacon lived in the same century as he did. But they followed him—he was their pioneer. And each of these men filled a separate niche. Montaigne was the sceptic, the critic, who applied to life and the universe the same disinterested acute discernment, knowing neither fear nor limits, which Erasmus only applied to institutions and ideas, pulling down more nobly than he constructed. Bacon stood for universal intellect, the searching light which illumined dark corners for practical ends. The first English master of scientific method, he saw that he who would learn must start from fact and build upwards instead of, like the Schoolmen, de-

ducing knowledge from preconceived theory. With his Inductive Method he inaugurated a new era in the study of phenomena and in metaphysics; Goethe, Darwin, Bentham were alike his children. But Bacon was light, not fire; he did not affect conduct or set foot on the common high-road. That function was fulfilled by another, by François Rabelais. If Bacon was the most inventive philosopher of the age, Rabelais was the most imaginative. It was not that he believed this or that, made such or such an innovation; he suggested, he stimulated in all directions; he was a fountain-head irrigating distant regions and remote generations. From prince to beggar he loved his kind, instead of scorning the herd like Erasmus and Bacon, or prying into their concerns for intellectual profit like Montaigne. If analogies are not too misleading, it might be said that Rabelais did for thought what Dickens did for fiction—he put it on a broader, kinder basis which made his gross exaggerations worth while.

"Laughter belongs to man alone" ("Le rire est le propre de l'homme")—with these words François Rabelais (1445–1553) sounded the knell of asceticism, damned Puritanism,

and gave mirth its status in the world. He proclaimed as his evangel "a certain gaiety of spirit, conceived in scorn of chance. And, if you ask me 'why?' good people, here is the unanswerable answer: Such is the will of the All-good and Omnipotent God, in which I acquiesce . . . whose Gospel of good tidings I worship."

But the gaiety could only spring from a large charity. "Wisdom cannot enter an unkind spirit, and knowledge without conscience is the ruin of the soul." That saying of Rabelais' is his corner-stone. "We establish sovereign good," he says, "not by taking and receiving, but by giving with both hands. There is only one thing that I dislike, and that is contempt of the commonplace."

Rabelais, like Erasmus, was an escaped monk; like Erasmus, he became the secretary of a prelate—in his case the literary Cardinal Du Bellay—and accompanied him to Rome; unlike Erasmus, he became a doctor, and an apostle of positive science. He was the first man in France to brave the Pope by dissecting a corpse—an heretical experiment considered to interfere with the resurrection of the body. This double life in him, that of the rebel monk

and of the doctor, gave him a new outlook upon the universe. "Abandon yourself to Nature's truths, and let nothing in this world be unknown to you." Thus he exclaims in chorus with all the great men of the Renaissance, but the road to truth that he chooses is his own. "If," he says, "we would achieve a sure and satisfying knowledge of the divine, two things are necessary—God's guidance and man's company." The Renaissance, when it sought God, had hitherto sought Him through the mind; to seek Him through the heart, to study human beings through sympathy, was a fresh conception, fraught with fresh issues.

After thirteen years, Rabelais left the monastery from disgust at monastic ignorance and immorality. Still in his monk's dress, he journeyed southward, enjoying the life of tavern and roadside, equally at home in a great lord's library or a clodhopper's hovel. He wandered for six years over France, he studied at the Universities, he learned dancing at Toulouse and medicine at Paris. He lectured at Montpellier, he practised there as doctor of the hospital, he dissected at Lyons, the home of enlightenment. Here it was that, in 1533, was printed his *Pantagruel*, the

"New Gospel" as, with true French acumen, it was called at Court; and it was followed later by *Gargantua* (now the first "book") and by four more parts, the last of which was probably left unfinished at his death and filled in by another hand. At Lyons Cardinal Du Bellay found him and thence took him to Rome, no auspicious day for the ecclesiastical dignitaries, who received their final place in his pages, shut, parrot-like, in gilt cages, in his Island of Papomanes. But he never left the Church, and later was made Curé of Meudon, a position the monotony of which he enlivened by many absences. In 1552 he resigned this living, and in the year following he died.

His massive philosophical fantasia, which took nothing seriously but Truth and God, that sound-humoured satire in the guise of wonder-stories about giants such as he and his public delighted in, created an epoch. It was, as it were, a game of Titans, playing at ball with rock-boulders, laughing that laugh of the gods which means a thunderstorm for man, a storm which clears the air. Not for nothing was it called the "New Gospel." In two months more copies had been sold than copies of the Bible in nine years. Francis I

read with avidity, so did that far greater light of letters, his sister, Marguerite of Angoulême. The Court followed suit; Pantagruelism became a recognized term for laughing work-a-day wisdom. It amused men while it made them think, and the thoughtless enjoyed the narrative for itself. The hostility of the Church and the Sorbonne did not take from its popularity, and the King's protection secured the author from persecution. He could always plead that he meant no more than fiction and, under shelter, doubtless, of this pretext, he even went so far as to dedicate his second book to Pope Paul III. He had no desire for martyrdom. "I am thirsty enough by nature," he said, "without heating myself any more."

Gargantua was born calling out for drink, and Pantagruel is only satisfied by the wine at the shrine of Bacbuc. Thirst is Rabelais' constant note—intellectual thirst, moral thirst, thirst for experience: in one word, thirst for reality; and from that category, as he conceived it, no natural appetite was excluded. The "*âme intellective*," as he called the soul, was but the sovereign, ruling a commonwealth of which such appetites were the needful

proletariat. Sometimes Rabelais is conscious of his allegory, sometimes he is not. He has tried to cram the whole of life into his book, and naïve tales and subtle undercurrents lie bedded in the inchoate mass. The first of the books is the chronicle of the Giant Gargantua, son of the Giant Grandgousier; the remaining four tell the education and adventures of Gargantua's son, Prince Pantagruel—also a giant—who in his manhood dares set sail across the perilous seas to seek "the Temple of the Divine Bacbuc," the far-off shrine of Knowledge, where springs the Fountain of magic wine which slakes the thirst of those who have the courage to find it. Gargantua is less primitive than Grandgousier, Pantagruel is more intellectual than Gargantua, yet Gargantua's letter of advice to Pantagruel is one of the noblest and warmest chapters ever written upon education. It is the coping-stone of Rabelais' huge construction. You may find many other things by the way—his own autobiography, the racy picture of his times, of the students and lawyers and apprentices; of the cities on the Loire and beyond them—but the final impression is that of his irony.

He runs full tilt against every kind of sham and hypocrite. "*Moque Dieu* prayers," priests, grabbing attorneys, unjust judges in fur-lined coats, fashionable doctors, pedants, "fools elect" and "fools metaphysical," come in equally for his lash. Fools, indeed, with their punctilious shibboleths, had, he thought, worked more havoc in the world than sinners. He is relentless in ridiculing them through the mouth of Panurge, that Falstaff of France, whom Pantagruel discovers in rags and makes into his boon-companion. If much that Panurge uttered does not bear repetition, still at no time was he without the touch of good fellowship. His creator has been compared to Swift, but no comparison could be more superficial. Both men liked to give a spade a bad name, but there the resemblance stops. Laughter partakes of the nature of what is laughed at, and that of Rabelais, never cynical, was not directed at things which are really sacred,—only at things which are considered so. He upheld the worth of mankind. Nowhere does he do this more strongly than in his picture of the Abbey of Thelema. Utopias were in vogue in his day—an outlet for men's

ideas on government and conduct conceived in the true Renaissance spirit, with fact and fancy richly intertwined, like the oak-leaves and Centaurs on a doorway of the time. Plato's Republic, together with the current tales of new worlds, had moved men's imaginations.

It is interesting to place side by side the three best-known examples of the sort: Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, Rabelais' *Thelema*, and Bacon's *New Atlantis*. That by More is the most classical and the most spiritual, with its vast, dim church, large enough to hold all who will pray to the "Unknown," and its belief in a kind of aristocratic socialism, not unlike that of Ruskin; the *Atlantis* is the most scientific and intellectual, with its seekers after knowledge, its "merchants of light" and "merchants of mystery"—founded, as it is, ostensibly, upon Christianity, but more truly upon a Christian theory approved by reason than upon a living faith from within. It is Rabelais who puts a heart into Nature, who brings a sense of the artist's religion; as much as Donne or Browning he declares the interdependence of soul and body. His Utopian cloister for men and women fulfils his hopes for the world.

Here the Renaissance lives side by side with the new faith. Over its sculptured portal was written "*Fais ce que voudras*" ("Do as you will"), the keynote of the Renaissance; and beside it was the motto of the new belief: "Enter here, all ye who in your lives proclaim the Gospel, fearless of men's hatred. Here shall ye find a refuge and a fortress against hostile error, which poisons the world. Enter, I say, and found a deeper faith." Men and women alike retired here to study together; they were dressed in rose and silver, their staircases were of porphyry, they had libraries and gardens. They lived with all their faculties, they lived nobly, because "Free people, well-born and gently nurtured, talking together in goodly companies, have a natural instinct, a spur which pricketh them on to virtuous deeds and withdraweth them from vice, and this spur is named Honour. These same people, when by vile subjection and constraint they are deformed and enslaved, divert from its true course the noble affection by the which they are willingly impelled into goodness. For we always set forth on forbidden enterprises and covet that which is denied us. . . . The husbands and wives

who chose each other freely at Thelema loved each other at the end of their lives as dearly as on the first day of their marriage."

We are reminded of Castiglione's liberty which was "a bridle to intercourse," but Rabelais cuts deeper—Rabelais was religious. His notions of sex, of life and death, and of what comes after, are penetrated by a vital faith, freethinking yet Evangelical, which gives him a place apart. It was, in great measure, his conviction that God is big enough to hallow Nature that made him roll together his finest thoughts and his grossest pothouse indecencies: chaotic indecencies for the sake of which he has been too much remembered and too little explored. But his coarseness never injured his soul or his vision of God.

"Go, my friends," says the priestess of Bacbuc, "Go, in the keeping of that Intellectual Sphere whose centre is everywhere, whose circumference is nowhere, whom we call God. The Egyptians hail their sovereign Deity as the Abstruse—the Hidden One. And because they invoked Him by this name, entreating Him to reveal Himself to them, He widened their knowledge of Himself and His creatures, guiding them by His bright lantern."

"There is," says More in his *Utopia*, "a certain godly power, unknown, everlasting, incomprehensible, far above the reach and capacity of man's wit, dispersed throughout all the world, not in bigness but in virtue and power—Him they call the father of all."

"Kings," writes Bacon, "could not obtain a greater honour than to be God's playfellows in that game (the game of knowledge); considering the great commandment of wits and means, whereby nothing needeth to be hidden from them."

These three passages may stand as summaries of these three men's conceptions of the Eternal. Bacon sees no way thither but that of knowledge and human pride. More chooses the road of worship and of charity. So does Rabelais, but with a difference. He adds to his other aspirations an intellectual thirst as strong as that of Bacon, and he does what no other sixteenth-century thinker succeeded in doing—he makes of religion an essence, not an idealized code or custom. Life is his Church, larger than any building, however large, and worship there is perpetual.

Christ's Christianity seemed to him the faith to steer by. "I reverence," he said,

"that Holiest Word of Good Tidings, the Gospel, as it first stood written." Christ is "the Saviour King, in whom all oracles, all prophecies found an end—just as the skulking shadows vanish at the light of the clear sun."

"Pan is dead!" cries a voice only heard by Pantagruel's pilot, as he steers the ship amidst the Grecian isles. "All the same," says Pantagruel, "I interpret this to mean that great Saviour of the faithful, who was slain shamefully in Judea through the envy of the Pontiffs, the Doctors and the Monks. He can well be called Pan, seeing that He is our all. All that we are, all that we live, all that we hope is Him, in Him, by Him. He is the good Pan, the great Shepherd, who . . . loveth not only His sheep but His shepherds."

Rabelais believed in the permanence of the soul. "I have faith," he wrote, "that all thinking souls are beyond the power of the scissors of Fate." "All are alike immortal," inheritors of "the sweet felicity prepared by the good God for His faithful . . . the Life of Immortality."

Yet he chose no high-sounding way to this felicity. He disliked ambition almost as much as asceticism. "Let those who will," he

says, "dispute about happiness and sovereign good; but it is my opinion that whosoever planteth cabbages, findeth instant happiness." The Via Media was the road he acknowledged and he raised it to a noble level. "I have," he wrote, "this hope in God . . . that He will fulfil our wishes, provided that they are lowly . . . Wish, then, for what is moderate. It will surely come to you, and with all the better cheer, if you toil and work while you are waiting. 'All very well,' you say, 'but God might just as well have given me sixty thousand as the thirteenth part of one half. For He is omnipotent.' And who taught you, poor people, thus to argue and prate about the power . . . of God? Humble yourselves before His Holy Face and acknowledge your imperfections."

It has seemed wise to dwell thus long upon Rabelais, because he is both typical and unique—the man who was most and least of the Renaissance. In one way he is, indeed, hostile to it. His work was anti-classical; it sounded the first note of the Romantics. Antiquity, tradition, were nothing to him, life was everything. Even intellect was secondary to life. The very

manner in which his book was written, jotted down, he tells us, at the dinner-table, in the intervals of eating, is almost a stab at precedent, a sign of spontaneous growth and force. Rabelais was the forefather of Molière; he was, also, in his lavish abundance, his extravagance in words, his lack of the unities, the ancestor of Victor Hugo and of all such writers as freed themselves from the canons of French Academies.

In so far he was of a later time, but none the less was he a man of the Renaissance. And in a peculiar sense. For he alone seems to sum up the movement in all its aspects. He was an educationist; a naturalist as studious of birds and shells and plants as Leonardo; a man of science and, like Bacon, the precursor of modern men of science; a spiritual idealist, a votary of common sense. He joined in himself the distinctive qualities both of Bacon and of Montaigne. Bacon imperially said, "I take all knowledge for my province," and despised small things. Montaigne was content with planting cabbages, and censured distant vistas as ostentatious. Rabelais was as intellectual as Bacon, as modest and as practical as Montaigne.

Thus did Rabelais transform the traditional religion of the Frenchman—the religion of good sense and good humour, the cheerful scepticism which sees and accepts things as they are, and does not aim too high for success.

Michel De Montaigne, the first Essayist (1533–1592), had no wish to transform it, he only developed it to the full and applied it with unbounding sincerity, thus presenting the world not with new thought, but with old thought looked at by a new thinker. His *Essays*, first published in 1595, under the guise of easy talk and anecdote, were the exposition of a philosophy made up of elements apparently inimical. Montaigne was both Epicure and Stoic. Eat and drink, he said, for to-morrow you die, but eat and drink wholesomely, and die with dignity. Life is not happy, it is interesting. Therefore arm yourself with endless curiosity and, if possible, with intelligence. Read, learn, live, for the sake of learning, reading, living. But do not be intellectual, for the intellect is the seat of arrogance. Humbly cultivate the power of being amused. Study your fellow-man that you may acquire the science of existence. Preserve yourself; above all, know yourself.

Never seek to be much to your fellows, or to do heroic deeds. "Who tries to play the Angel, plays the beast." Take care not to play the beast—for no moral motives, but for the sake of reason and human dignity. Right and wrong are dangerous words, unrecognized by Nature, and Nature is the great teacher. But vice is unwholesome, violence inconvenient, cruelty inhuman and, alone, unpardonable. For the rest, Nature spreads out before your eyes an infinite book. Master it untiringly, tabulate with indifference, but do not judge. Before everything, throughout your life, be natural, avoid frills and furbelows, say what you mean. In education, also, follow Nature as far as possible. Pedants are the worst fools because they are pretentious; hypocrites and martyrs are to be eschewed. As for religion, since we can know nothing and truth unknown is truth improbable, let us get rid of worry at the outset and believe everything.

Yet, at the same time that he preached this doctrine, he confessed to his constant use of the Lord's Prayer. A sceptic he was, not a materialist. Whoever would understand his attitude must read his *Apologie de Raimond*

Sebond, the longest of his Essays, in which he sets forth all his belief in the natural and all his disbelief in the supernatural, his rejection of miracles and of man's immortality, of cant and of all extreme opinions. Where Rabelais put charity, Montaigne substituted tolerance; where Rabelais hoped, Montaigne endured. He searched out Nature, he acknowledged her credentials, as jealously as Rabelais or Bacon. He created no Thelema, but he would have enjoyed living there. "Those do wrong," he writes, "who wish to disjoin our two great halves . . . our soul must be commanded not to draw aside, not to despise and desert the body." Both soul and body should work for one end, our main end, self-knowledge and self-dependence. "The greatest thing in the world," he says, "is to know how to belong to oneself."

Montaigne's life accorded with his creed. He spent his most fruitful hours with his books, in the tower he built for himself as a refuge from the disturbances of domesticity—in that famous library where he had collected round him the Ancients whom he loved. He made a kind, indifferent husband, a kind, negligent father, a just master, a tolerably

good Mayor of Bordeaux. His noblest years were those of his romantic friendship for the poet La Boétie, his only sorrow that for his early death. He would have agreed with much in Macchiavelli's *Prince*, yet his own ideal sovereign was his much-loved guest, Henri IV.

But Montaigne has a potent significance outside his philosophy; he marked a fresh stage in the life and scope of literature. He was the first happy rambler among books, the first desultory reader. And he provided the first-fruits of desultory literature. He invented the Essay, the loose cover for thought and fancy. He used this new form to tell us more about himself, his minutest habits, tastes, and fancies, than perhaps any other man has done; and under its shelter he may also be said to have invented the art of autobiography, the taste for personal detail, which began the modern era and foreshadowed modern psychology. With all his ardour for the classics, he was, in his own way, as anti-classical as Rabelais. A "modern" he remains—the first critic who on any large scale applied criticism to common life.

Bacon (1561–1626) was the first critic to

make discovery the principal goal of science. His quest was "the inquiry of Truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it; the knowledge of Truth which is the presence of it; and the belief of Truth, which is the enjoying of it . . . Truth, which only doth judge itself." The life of Bacon belongs mainly to the seventeenth century, and so, but for his first ten Essays, does his work. The complete edition of these only appeared in 1625, his *Advancement of Learning* in 1605, his *Novum Organum* in 1610. This, his chief book—the setting forth of his great Inductive method, and only the first instalment of his greater unfinished project, the *Instauratio*, a survey of the whole of knowledge—is therefore outside the boundaries of the Renaissance. Yet so much is he the outcome of the movement, so much its final expression, that a glance, however cursory, at the position that he held seems essential.

He was certainly of the Renaissance when he ordered music in the next room to that in which he meditated, and had flowers and sweet herbs scattered on his dining-table, "to refresh his spirits and memory." But he seems beyond it when he already speaks of it

as history—as "the time when it pleased God to call the Church of Rome to account for their degenerate manners"; when also "it was ordained by the Divine Providence that there should attend withal a renovation and new spring of all other knowledges." Never has the glory of pure mind shone more resplendently than in Bacon; his achievement was instantaneous, whether in abstract thought or in scientific experiment. Milton and Goethe came near to him, but Milton had not so much quicksilver, Goethe did not present so hard a front. He owed little to writers of his own day or before it. External influences he underwent, and he acknowledges his debt to Montaigne for the form of the Essay. But that form he developed on his own lines, very different from those of the Frenchman. For though Bacon could alternate massive state with flowing wit, and architectural diction with light grace or terse comment, bringing "home" his subjects "to men's businesse and bosomes"; and though his ease is amazing, it is always ease in full dress, not the broad, arm-chair ease of Montaigne. Bacon speaks with the tongues of men and of angels, in a style which grows

with the thought that prompted it till we cannot tell which is which, a style which is the voice of Truth made musical—but it is a style of classical descent.

No less different is the colour of the two men's minds. Bacon adored the intellect that Montaigne discarded. It sometimes seems as if that worship had absorbed all the rest of the man—heart, honour, sincerity; as if he were made of intellect alone. Such, perhaps, is the key to his spirit. Humility was not his; he saw God through man, not man through God; like the Popes, he set up a "Super-man": but his was a Super-man of the intellect and he called him indifferently human or divine. Apart from intellect, he knew no life worth living. "The truth of being and the truth of knowing are one, differing no more than the direct beam and the beam reflected." And "knowing," which springs from wonder, "the seed of knowledge," must be got for its own sake; directly "men fall to framing conclusions," harbouring "weak fears or vast desires," there arise "carefulness and trouble of mind" to ruffle the waters and disturb the image. Rabelais says, "Live and know"; Montaigne says,

"Look on and know"; Bacon says, "Know." He also says that "To spend too much time in studies is sloth," and that they "are perfected by experience"—but to him life only meant extended knowledge, and knowledge must precede it.

Francis Bacon, philosopher and statesman, with the "delicate lively hazel eie," which Dr. Harvey said was "like the eie of a viper," saw most things to be seen in the universe, excepting the heart of his fellow-man.

CHAPTER IX

THE FRENCH RENAISSANCE

THE French Renaissance lived its full life and reached its zenith under its great patron, Francis I, that *rara avis*, a king with the mind of an artist. To his enthusiasm for building are due not only Fontainebleau and Chambord and much of the palace at Blois, but also a great part of those enchanted *châteaux* of the Loire erected by great nobles to follow his example—stately homes and fortresses in one, where cupids and epigrams carved in stone decorate guard-rooms and *garde-robes*, and politicians were provided with secret chambers for eavesdropping, and courtiers with winding, shell-like stairways. The name of Pierre Lescot (1510–1578) is inseparable from the palace of the Louvre which he began to reconstruct under Francis' orders; that of the greater Philibert de l'Orme (1518–1570) from the palace of the Tuileries which he built under Henri II, as well as Diane de

Poitiers' home at Anet. De l'Orme alone of artists in France recalls the many-sidedness of Italy, and had mastered not only his profession but the arts of writing and of fortification. For the rest, what makes the French Renaissance so distinct and self-contained, as well as so much smaller than that of Italy, is its restrictedness. The characteristic search after Universality did not tempt the precise and practical French mind, which loves boundaries and prefers to concentrate on one spot rather than embrace vast horizons. The nation that re-invented *Alexandrins* could never have aimed at Infinity, and its very limitations, preserving tradition, no less fostered national growth. "The French," wrote De l'Orme, "are so constituted that they think nothing good that doth not come from a foreign land . . . there you have the French temperament . . . mobile-minded and mercurial . . . The best inspiration cometh from the things natural to the country where one lives . . . and by the reproduction of all things natural to French soil and to the inclination of Frenchmen." The main trend of France was always this—to put native wine in classic bottles

and to see that it did not burst them. It was thus that Philibert, in spite of his wider powers, made himself the worst foe of the camp of Italian artists introduced by Francis, while his doctrine, then and later, found active support, notably among French sculptors.

Jean Goujon (*d.* 1564–1568) was the very voice of France. Whoever has seen his Fontaine des Innocents, the public fountain which he made for Paris, will know why. The rhythmic figures of his nymphs, bending, curving, floating on aerial draperies, full of watery enchantment—his Glory and his trumpet-blowing Fame on the outer walls of the Louvre —his reclining statue of Diana—are full of a lyric elegance, of inborn style, of that kind of spontaneous artificialness which a Frenchman means by *chic*. Michel Colombe, his senior but his contemporary, is also essentially French. And he had been to Italy, had learnt his craft in the Burgundian School of Dijon, the town through which passed all travellers between Italy and France. His chisel wrought the famous church of Brou, in the forest of Bourg-en-Bresse: the shrine of married love built to perpetuate Margaret of Austria's grief for the death of her husband, Duke

Philibert of Savoy. The two tombs with their recumbent figures—the Duke sentinelled by sorrowing children holding his helmet and his gauntlet, the Duchess wrapped in her long hair beneath her canopy of pious, modish little saints — are masterpieces of richly wrought exactitude. Colombe founded a school at Tours, but it brought no pupil who could rival him. And Germain Pilon, of a later date, the sculptor laureate, as it were, of Henri II, the maker of the stylish Graces who bore the sepulchral urn which held his heart, is already on the decadent path. The nude figures of that period in France look as if they were waiting for Parisian clothes; they are devoid of permanent qualities.

In painting, also, the French could show no name of the first order. There were crude and pious artists of the fourteenth century and, from the beginning of the fifteenth, there flourished the Burgundian school—the group that, under the patronage of the Dukes of Burgundy, long the rulers of the Netherlands, was brought into such close relations with the Flemings. Burgundian painting may, indeed, be said to be an offshoot of Flemish art, with that same French quality

of *chic* superadded; and that quality was so prominent as to become distinctive and to give to France her own pictorial brevet. Her saints and Virgins are crisper and more lucid, as it were more epigrammatic than those of Flanders; they, too, are prose, but prose that sparkles. And there were painters outside this influence—the greatest of them, Etienne Fouquet, at Tours (*d. c.* 1480), the exquisite illustrator of Chevalier's *Livre d'heures*, the pages of which, marvels of limpid picture narrative, are treasured at Chantilly and Frankfurt, while his portraits in the Louvre of Charles VIII and of Ursins remain to represent his achievement on a larger scale. And portrait-painting it was which, after that, absorbed the best powers of France and proved to be the natural outlet for her critical insight and accomplished sense of beauty. The brilliant little canvases of Jean Clouet and of his much greater son, François (*d. c.* 1584), with those of Corneille de Lyon and Dumoustier, show us, one after another, the personages of their day: princesses with jewelled sleeves, and white-hatted baby Dauphins, against bright green backgrounds—masterly summaries of character and of manners.

If we turn from painters to men of learning, their numbers, compared to those of Italy, keep much the same proportion. Yet there are enough to make a goodly harvest, and if they were born later than the Italians, perhaps because of that, they went deeper. Foremost among them comes the illustrious Budæus, the Greek scholar and philologist, the counsellor who helped Francis and his sister to found the Collège de France, the student so absorbed in gaining knowledge that he forgot it was his wedding-day and forsook his bride for his books. Or there were the Estiennes, Robert and Henri, father and son, Latinists of universal fame, forcing even their household to speak Latin; or Paradis and Vatable, versed in Hebrew; or Postel, the Orientalist, who dreamed that Francis might reign as Emperor, uniting East and West; or Amyot, the Greek professor, who as a student nearly starved in a Paris garret, and was only kept alive by the weekly loaf that his mother sent him from the country.

As for poets, there were swarms of buzzing academic bees, industriously rhyming upon Love sacred and profane, and the like hackneyed themes. But the only name worth

remembering in the first half of the sixteenth century is that of Clément Marot, the writer of natural poetry as opposed to that of erudition, and in so far the successor of the bigger François Villon (1431—?), and of the more attractive Charles d'Orléans (1391–1465). Of these, Marot's two predecessors, Villon marked an epoch. He knocked down tradition; he was the literary ancestor of Rabelais, the poet of instinct, the lover of the roadside, the adventurer of unbridled tongue and pungent satire, the scamp that Rabelais never was—whose *Ballade des Pendus*, and *Où sont les neiges d'Antan?* sounded the first note of a great national poetry. Charles d'Orléans, for twenty-five years the prisoner of Henry V in England, and later the successor of his father, Louis, the murdered Duke of Orleans, had a slighter reputation than Villon. But he had the gift of magic that haunts the spirit, and the love of nature that endears, and his *Ballades* and *Rondeaux* will remain as long as men love verse. Clément Marot (1495–1544) is of lighter build; he has no word for our hearts, but his grace, his freshness, his mundane gaiety, his Lines to the parrots of princesses and to the princesses

themselves, his thistledown verse, and his fashionable rhymed version of the psalms, have a piquant charm which could belong to no singer but a French one.

Nowhere else were the poets, scholars, artists, of that time more honoured than at the Court of France. Louis XI, Charles VIII, Louis XII, Francis I, were their protectors. But they had a nobler guardian. The tutelary spirit of the French Renaissance was a woman —the sister of Francis, Marguerite D'Angoulême, Queen of Navarre. Herself a force in literature, a poet, a romancist of no mean order, she seems to stand forth as the type of the multi-coloured contrasts of her day. She wrote the *Heptameron*, that volume of Mid-Renaissance stories told in summer meadows by a summer company of lords and ladies, tales as ribald as those of her model, Boccaccio; no less did she write her abstruse *Mirror of a Sinful Soul* and her spiritual hymns. Artist and mystic, a heretic charged by the Sorbonne who yet remained within the Church, a fighter, a Reconciler, a scholarly and deeply read woman, the cherished correspondent and disciple of Erasmus—all these seeming paradoxes of her nature were bound

together by her broad humanity. She should have been painted as a kind of intellectual Madonna beneath whose outspread mantle was sheltered every needy person of the time. Reformers, poets, scholars, from Rabelais, Budæus, Amyot, to the humblest refugee—no one appealed to her in vain.

She was distinguished from her countrywomen in that her power was due to what she was, rather than to what she did. The French ladies of the Renaissance who, even more than the Italians, quickened the social arts, showed one marked difference from these. They were eminently practical; their learning and culture were directed to some definite end. The "Flying Squadron" of beauties and wits organized by Catherine de' Medici was nothing more than a secret political agency working systematically through charm. Jeanne d'Albret, the daughter of Marguerite, was a practical Reformer and propagandist; so was the older princess, Calvin's pupil, Renée of Ferrara. Diane de Poitiers, the mistress of Henri II, was born a governess and an organizer; while the Reine Margot, wife of Henri IV, a deep reader and a vivid autobiographer, was also a politician of end-

less intrigues; and Louise Labé, the poetess of Lyons, whose sonnets strike a note of natural passion very rare in her day, figured hardly less as an advanced feminist and a military tactician. Marguerite d'Angoulême alone among them could have sincerely said that "she found it enough to exist."

She did not live to see the work of the great French poets of her century. It was for Marguerite de Savoie, her niece and a weaker version of herself, to be the patron of the *Pléiade*, that group of seven poets who inaugurated a new poetic era. They were led by Pierre de Ronsard (1524–1585) and by Joachim Du Bellay (1525–1560); and this movement which renewed French poetry might never have been but for the lucky chance of a meeting at a country inn, where Ronsard, the princely poet bred at Court, met Du Bellay, the Cardinal's poor relation. Here it was that they sat and talked about poetry, and laid down the lines of their project—the revival of the French language.

Ronsard was an aristocrat, seventeenth cousin to Queen Elizabeth, who sent him a diamond ring. He had spent his boyhood as page to the Duke of Orleans; had gone twice

to Scotland, the first time in the train of James V, bridegroom of Madeleine de France. But greater to him than these outward incidents was his discovery, when fifteen years old, of Virgil—the event that decided his career. He became enamoured of the classics, went to Paris to learn, and was lucky enough to come across Dorat, a pedagogue poet, a real scholar, who was then absorbed in starting a new scheme of classical education. This scheme was embodied in his Collège de Coqueret, where Ronsard presently read Æschylus, acted Aristophanes, meditated on the future of literature. With Du Bellay for a colleague, his aims became more clearly defined. The two poets were one in purpose. Poetry, they thought, was dying of tradition and of a limited vocabulary. If it was to live, new words must be imported—from the classics, from French itself: names of crafts, technical terms, words of all sorts, from high-roads as well as from libraries; and these they proceeded to throw into enchanting form, subtle, sinuous, silvery, to measures light-footed and flexible, like the dance of nymphs and dryads in classic groves. The Ancients were their models, but they adapted them

to present needs. Ronsard's poems to forest fountains and past loves are the exact counterparts of Goujon's sculpture; his picture of himself in the woods, book in hand, followed by his page with a basket of peaches, is the perfectly wrought image of sixteenth century enjoyment; of a Nature which becomes charmingly elaborate, and an elaborateness which grows charmingly natural.

Du Bellay's poems, though kindred in aim, strike a deeper note. Like Ronsard, Du Bellay was an aristocrat, but, unlike Ronsard, he had known poverty, struggle, constant bodily suffering. Those sonnets of his suggested by Rome, finer French sonnets than had yet been written, are nobler, if less perfect than Ronsard's verse. They breathe a strain transcending Renaissance Paganism, a sense of the mortality of man's empire and the immortality of his spirit. And he can deal in lighter strains that delight us from pure melody. His masterpiece is, perhaps, his *Vanneurs*, the elusive, magic lyric of the winnowers, which blends their pastoral sounds with the rhythmic motion of figures on a classic vase—a marble copy of some antique dug up in the field of a Cardinal.

Their manifesto was published in 1550, in the shape of Du Bellay's *Illustration de la langue française.* "The noblest work of their (the Romans') State . . . could not hold out against the blows of Time without the aid of their language," says the author. "Are we then less than Greeks or Romans that we make so little of our own tongue . . . the wide plains of Greece and Rome are already so full that little empty space is left. But, great God, what an infinity of sea there still remains before we can anchor in port! . . . March then courageously, ye Frenchmen . . . sow, I pray you . . . a fresh crop—the famous race of the Gallo-Greeks. Pillage without conscience the sacred treasures of the Delphic Temple."

The exquisite precision which the Pleïade demanded found no favour in the literary world. All the poets of the old school rose against them; matters were not improved by a volume of Ronsard's poems, and another of Du Bellay's, which appeared shortly after, and it was not till Marguerite de Savoie took them under her protection that their reputation was established. Du Bellay had had but time to print his *Antiquités de Rome* and

his *Regrets*, when Death cut short his career. But Ronsard continued to send forth poems amid growing acclamations. He became the spoilt child of the Muses; honours flowed in upon him. He was appointed to be Mary Stuart's tutor; Charles IX could not do without him; he was adulated, caressed. But his task was accomplished, his mother-tongue permanently enriched, the fortunes of poetry transformed. And he aimed high. "Nourish lofty conceptions," he said, "such as do not drag upon the earth."

CHAPTER X

THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE

RONSARD'S exhortation would have been needless in England. There feeling came before form and moulded form in the fire of its own intensity, allowing the heat to shape and modify each curve; too often, perhaps, superimposing ornament, in the shape of conceits and eupheuisms, unlike the methods of the French, who, perfect in the jeweller's art, first fashioned their exquisite crystal goblet and then poured in their sparkling Hippocrene.

In the Renaissance of England, both in its power and its limitations, we see what seems to be the strangest version of the movement. There was no painting and no sculpture; for modern efforts to establish English schools of either art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have met with small success; and such works of distinction as remain belong to the school of Holbein, or to that of the Italian

sculptor, Torrigiani, or to some other foreign influence; while the revival of architecture, inspired by Inigo Jones, only began in the reign of James I. On the other hand, Englishmen could boast a poetry, a drama, a prose, unrivalled by any nation then or afterwards—of a sudden splendour and fertility which can only be compared to the outburst of art in Italy. In the England of the sixteenth century the names of writers who have endured stand as thick as the names of painters and sculptors of the Cinquecento.

In the case of music, also, great things were done. Never, before or since, has England given the world so many composers. The fortunes of music were in that day closely linked with those of poetry. Dowland, Morley, Orlando Gibbons, Weelkes, Wilbye, created the madrigal, as the Elizabethan poets evoked the sonnet. Byrd and Tallis and John Bull lent their lustre to church music. To *The Triumphs of Oriana*—a collection of songs—twenty composers contributed. And apart from their own art, they must have had a striking effect on verse; they suggested metres, perhaps even subjects; they inspired, as they in their turn were inspired by, the lyric masters

around them. "He cometh to you," says Sidney of the poet, "with words, either accompanied with or prepared for the well inchaunting skill of Musicke."

Yet, even so, the glory of these musicians paled before that of literature. And in the very scholarship of England, it is noteworthy that its lasting fruits were literary, not scientific. What remains is not Lilly's once-famed Latin Grammar, or George Buchanan's Latinity, or Roger Ascham's learning, but North's *Plutarch* and Chapman's *Homer* and Phaer's *Virgil*, those vivid translations which brought the classics within the reach of every reader and influenced the imagination of men, from Shakespeare downwards.

Of the writers of that golden period—poets, dramatists, prosodists, theologians—many, transcending any period, belong to all time. The name of Shakespeare transcends place also, and belongs to the world; while the crop of second- and third-rate stars, unrivalled for its richness, becomes, like the rest, a part of our national heritage, rather than part of a great movement. Their works and their lives make an essential element of our education, and it would be superfluous to touch upon

them here except as they were affected by the Renaissance.

These great men brought new bullion into English literature; they virtually created the English sonnet, the English song, the English drama. Song and drama had existed before them, but it was they who gave the form which made their work an enduring possession for other ages. Sir Thomas Wyat (1503–1542) and the Earl of Surrey (1517?–1547), both travellers in Italy, imported the Petrarchan sonnet into their native country and inaugurated the reign of the lyric—that infinitely various growth, many coloured, many scented, fresh, luxuriant, the flower of an infinitely various experience. Tottell's *Miscellany*, an anthology of poems practically written between 1537 and 1557, proves how suddenly, how generously, the art of poetry developed. The slender volume contains the work of a little group of singers of whom Wyat and Surrey are the chief. The metres here shown already give rich evidence of the richer summer to come; their simpler curves, their lilt, their measures, are the first signs of the falling cadences and wreathed interlacings of fifty years farther on. But the real growth

was one of range, of increased emotional capacity; and the metrical development was but an answer to the need for a more manifold expression, to the insistent new life crying out for new forms of adequate beauty. The Elizabethans knew instinctively that life is greater than art, that art can only live in so far as it interprets life. Such knowledge was no part of the equipment of the Pleïade. To them art was the accompaniment, not the interpretation of existence. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that though England shaped her new forms according to her widening necessities, she shaped them upon patterns with which Italy first, and in later days France, provided her. She moulded them to those necessities, she infused them with her qualities, till they became her own. Yet, initially, she owed these nations a debt.

The debt, however, has been exaggerated. The game of influences is a dangerous one, amusing for experts, but comparatively unessential. That which matters in art and character is what we make of the influences, what changes we undergo as we go on. Thus disputes about the comparative degrees of the effect of France or Italy upon us bring about

little more than interesting investigation. What stands out is the generous, imaginative prose and poetry which was before them, and will be after.

But England would not have been of her day had she not delighted in experiments, metrical and verbal—in eupheuisms—in every kind of intellectual pastime. And she did so with valuable results. If Wyat wrote our first sonnet, Surrey gave us our first blank verse. From that time onwards, the work of transmutation was ceaseless. The Petrarchan sonnet was wrought upon, transformed, till the hands of Sidney and of Shakespeare perfected the English sonnet, with its laws less mechanical and more elastic than those of Petrarch's school; with the prominence of the final two lines, which are the climax and the summary of the whole.

The sonnets became an exercise, a fashion, as much as did the writing of elaborate letters in the France of the eighteenth century. Every rhymer tried his hand, and though, as in the period of Sensibility, this glib endeavour produced much academic work, it gave the real poets an ease and an agility, a power of swift concentration, unparallelled in his-

tory. Shakespeare's passion, with its myriad beauty-reflecting images; Spenser's intellectual majesty, robed in glistening embroideries; Daniel's high-pitched Platonic conceits; Drayton's emotional power, drew to a point and, within the prescribed fourteen lines, lived, as it were, a full life in a day. Sidney's *Stella and Astrophel*, Daniel's *Delia*, Drayton's *Idea*, Spenser's *Amoretti*, all of them sonnet-sequences, came out between 1591 and 1595; while 1597 saw the first manuscript version of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

A new spring was given to the poetic life of England by Sir Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*, which was not printed till 1595, although written in 1581, to emulate, in some sort, the "*Deffense*" of Du Bellay. Sidney's treatise is also a manifesto—a kind of banner of the Renaissance for the poets to march under. But its subject is very different, and very characteristic of England. Sidney defends poetry as a moral asset for the nation, the finest of its possessions.

He is soaked in Plato, but his Platonism is that of the Reformation, deeply concerned with conduct. The classics he chiefly values as models for behaviour, and to him learning

is a "purifying of wit, enriching of memory, enabling of judgment and enlarging of conceyt," whose "final end is to lead and draw us to as high a perfection as our degenerate soules made worse by their clayey lodgings can be capable of." And learning is not all: "Sometimes the prettie tales of wolves and sheepe can include the whole considerations of wrong-doing and patience." Apollo was with Sidney when he knew it not, and his love of beauty existed for its own sake. "Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers Poets have done—neither with pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers; nor whatsoever else may make the too much loved earth more lovely."

His definition of poetry is a wide one. It includes all fiction—or "fayning" as he has it—the Parables of the Gospels and More's *Utopia*, no less than verse. "Certainly even our Saviour Christ could as well have given the moral common-places of uncharitableness and humbleness, as the divine narration of Dives and Lazarus, but that his through-searching wisdom knew the estate of Dives burning in hell, and of Lazarus being in Abraham's bosome, would more constantly

inhabit both the memory and judgment." To allure, to haunt, to edify the spirit—such was the mission of poetry as Sidney conceived it; and it is the power to haunt which makes the poet so much stronger than the philosopher. "With a tale forsooth he cometh unto you: with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner." Sidney unconsciously discovered the inner secret of art. "To be mooved to do that which we know, *Hic opus: Hic labor est.*"

His contemporary, Richard Hooker, had found it also. Church music, he says, "doth much edify—if not the understanding, because it teacheth not, yet surely the affection, because therein it worketh much." Sidney's other prose masterpiece, the *Arcadia*, a Court idyll and romance, sown here and there with stray blooms of verse, belongs to the general, his *Apology* to the English Renaissance. Hence it has seemed best to dwell upon it rather than upon the enchanting pastoral. And the same may be said of the starry poetry of Spenser: of those two works, the *Faerie Queene*, and the *Hymne of Heavenly Beautie*. The first is a Christian allegory clothed in rich Renaissance draperies; the last, a spiritual psalm, bright,

like the missals, with golden borders full of birds and beasts and flowers—a psalm translated into Platonic terms, adoring Unity and raising man through beauty. But the spirit of the Reformation pierces through. Spenser had read the Bible and remembered it, even in the full pomp of the mundane *Epithalamion*.

> " Open the temple gates unto my love,
> Open them wide that she may enter in "

recalls King David; while in the *Hymn* we constantly find the form of Protestantism beneath the sumptuous words.

> " But lowly fall beneath His mercie-seate
> Close covered with the Lamb's integrity.
> From the just wrath of his avengeful threate
> That sits upon the righteous throne on high;
> His throne is built upon Eternity,
> More firm or durable than steele or brasse,
> Or the hard diamond, which them both doth passe.
>
> There in His bosome Sapience doth sit,
> The soveraine dearling of the Deity.

Clad like a Queene in royall robes, most fit
For so great powre and peerlesse majesty,
And all with gemmes and jewels gorgeously
Adorned, that brighter than the starres appeare,
And make her native brightnes seem more cleare.

And looke at last up to that Soveraine Light,
From whose pure beams all perfect beauty springs,
That kindleth love in every godly spright,
Even the love of God; which loathing brings
Of this vile world and these gay-seeming things;
With whose sweet pleasure being so possest
Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest."

No Florentine, no Roman, no Frenchman, could have used these words. A German might have felt them, but he could not have evolved the beauty wherewith to clothe them. It is the distinction of England that she knew

how to reconcile art and faith, beauty and religion.

For Spenser is no isolated instance. The poetry of Elizabethan England is deeply religious, and hence it acquires that profounder interest, that enduring significance which make it live for us of to-day when the contemporary poetry of other nations is forgotten, or of the past. You find the same note in Ben Jonson and Fulke Greville, in Southwell and Wotton, in Dekker and Shirley. And foremost, perhaps, in Walter Raleigh, as Evangelical as Spenser. Sometimes the strain is metaphysical. Sometimes it is primitive and human, as in Raleigh's cry of the heart—

"But from this earth, this grave, this dust
My God shall raise me up I trust."

or in his—

"Give me my Scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon.
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer;
No other balm will there be given;
Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
Travelleth towards the land of heaven;
Over the silver mountains
Where spring the nectar fountains:
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill.
My soul will be a-dry before,
But after it will thirst no more."

Yet, a great, perhaps the greater part of our poetry is far from being religious. We have inherited from that day perhaps the wealthiest love-poetry of modern Europe. None the less it is full of a spiritual force which gives it weight; of passion, which is the religion of the heart.

These sixteenth century lyrics of ours breathe forth goodness rather than virtue, worship rather than observance. We are not Classics like the Pleïade. We are Romantics, and the inspiration of English poetry blows not from the past but from the present. From Wyat's "Forget not yet my tried

intent " to Shakespeare's Sonnets, and Drayton's " Since there's no help, Come let us kiss and part," we can show lines the white heat of which still has power to burn. Or else we get intellectual fire from the highly wrought sonnets of Sir Philip Sidney and the less inspired work of Daniel. Everywhere there is the sense of permanence, the absence of the grace merely transient, and of an ornate mythology.

A grace we have of our own, in odes and songs and couplets and roundelays—invocations to Amaryllis and to Corydon, to Youth and to the May, from the hands of Lodge and Campion, Spenser, Drayton, and a score of others; but it is a grace full of warmth and shifting colour, not the clean-cut grace of the classics. Everywhere there is spontaneous growth, and nothing is more surprising than the many different kinds of verse displayed—sonnet, lyric, hymn, dramatic narrative, dramatic song, each with its individual character sharply defined, even when the subject is the same. If we take up Greene's *Song of Sephestia* and Breton's *Cradle-Song*—both tragic lullabies sung by deserted women—or the numerous pastorals of the moment, the

distinctive quality of each poet stands out in bold relief against the background of the time.

All the Elizabethan qualities natural and intellectual—passion, dramatic energy, lyric force—were united in the last, and, after Shakespeare and Spenser, the greatest singer of the century, the first of the metaphysical poets, John Donne (1573–1639), whose satires and love-poems were mostly written by 1600. His big words and big images, tense with genius, bear the Elizabethan stamp, but his thought, his conception of love, are of the future.

"I long to talk with some old lover's ghost,
Who died before the god of love was born."

Such words have all the splendid emotion of the morning. And to him, no sublimated Platonist, but a believer in the senses, the final miracle of love was the fusion of body and soul.

"And whilst our souls negotiate there,
We like sepulchral statues lay;
All day the same our postures were,
And we said nothing all the day.

But O alas! so long, so far
Our bodies why do we forbear?
They are ours, though not we; we are
The intelligences, they the sphere . . .

So must pure lovers' souls descend
To affections and to faculties
Which sense may reach and apprehend—
Else a great prince in prison lies."

Donne was a mystic of the senses; passion was his vocation, and only his own age could have lent his tongue adequate expression. "They are ours, though not we"—the phrase sums up the outcome of the English Renaissance, the noble balance struck between sense and spirit, the gift for that compromise which is strength, not weakness.

The rhythm that was in all these poets, that of fairy dance or stately march, did not confine itself within poetic limits. Bacon, Sidney, Hooker, prove the contrary. Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, a treatise on Church government, is in itself a triumphal progress of language, and if anything could have moved the Puritans, it should have been his protest against them. "The star of reason and

learning and all other suchlike helps, beginneth no otherwise to be thought of than if it were an unlucky comet." The words are fresh from the mint—virgin words, untarnished and intact, firm yet flexible, leaving a margin for the imagination; and in that margin lies the power of the writers of Elizabeth's day, whether they wrote in prose or verse.

It was the power of the drama; and among the literary miracles of Elizabeth's reign that drama was, perhaps, the greatest. Its sudden outburst—the unaccountable change from the wintry bud to the full blossom—is as inexplicable as the hidden germ that produced it. We pass straight from Udall's clumsy *Gammer Gurton*, the first comedy, and Sackville's clumsy *Gorboduc*, the first tragedy, with their crude types, "A Sycophant," or the like, their bombastic villains and heroes, to the subtle individuals of Shakespeare, Webster, Jonson, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher; to *As You Like It* and *Every Man in His Humour* and *A New Way to Pay Old Debts;* to *Hamlet* and *Othello*, to *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Maid's Tragedy*. And this, while in Italy and France there was practically nothing of worth outside the classics—the plays of

Plautus and Terence, or else the modern imitations of the Ancients; unless it were for the slang satires and burlesques which the students played in Paris, or the popular Scripture pantomimes of Italy. Yet though the quick harvest remains an ultimate mystery, we can, without presumption, find a few suggestive traces — aids to imagination and comprehension, however partial and inadequate these may be.

The romance deep-rooted in English soil made us naturally discard the classical models so dear to other countries. But not without a struggle. War was waged between the Classics and the Romantics; between the advocates of the Unities and their opponents; between the followers of Ben Jonson and those of Shakespeare. The battle, however, was not long protracted and the field remained to the Romantics. There were profound reasons for the fact. The same moral fervour which lent significance to our poetry was at work in our drama. It centred interest upon character, it concentrated imagination upon the subtle interplay of moral forces: upon contrast and conflict and the discrepancy between body and spirit, between man's great possi-

bilities and his narrow limitations. To this human pageant was added the gift peculiarly ours among the nations—the priceless gift of humour, which made us quick to dive below the surface, to perceive these incongruities and differences, to read and to discern with sympathy. Sympathy is the basis of the drama, and humour cannot live without kindness. In the France of that day we get pungent satire; but humour turns satire into comedy, it ripens social ease and social arts, and with them it ripens dramatic art, that measuring-rod of social growth. England has in truth the very gifts essential to a great and free drama, the gifts that in securer and less stirring times have sought refuge in the novel.

The English drama was born under a happy star. English talents found the very atmosphere to foster them and bring them to flower. They were bathed in the sunlight of adventure. While Shakespeare and his fellows were maturing, Hawkins was exploring, Drake made his three Homeric voyages to the Indies, Raleigh discovered Virginia, Hakluyt wrote his *Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation.* Amazing travellers'-tales were in

everybody's mouth at a time when credulity was as young and as elastic as the language. There were other enterprises also to be shared in at home and abroad—the Spanish wars, the conquest of Ireland, the intrigues at Court; there were other heroes — Essex, Leicester, Sir Richard Grenfell, the Queen herself. Men embarked in quest of emotional experience as they embarked upon other adventures. Nothing was set, all things were possible. No wonder that imaginations were inflamed and that the vast drama played in the world without suggested the drama on the stage within.

The names of the dramatists are legion; they would have bulked large without Shakespeare, and that he should have stood a head and shoulders above them is only a measure of his stature. Marlowe, earliest of them all, cut off prematurely, the creator of *Dr. Faustus*, of *Tamurlaine* and *Edward II*, is apart from the rest, a creature of half-fulfilled promise, a lyric genius, a master of noble outlines. Beaumont and Fletcher, with their *Philaster*, *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *A Maid's Tragedy*, are perhaps the finest masters of their craft, the suavest and the best proportioned;

Webster, with his *Duchess of Malfi* and *Vittoria Corombona*, is deepest in insight, biggest in language. Ford, of *The Broken Heart*, rivals him in tragic intensity and in the power of working up a crisis; Massinger, in his *New Way to Pay Old Debts* and his *Duke of Milan*, stands out for sharp perception, for the grasp with which he draws a thousand web-like threads together. Dekker, Kyd, Peel, Middleton, Marston, a throng of minor names follow suit. All alike, in great or lesser degree, bathed in the same generous noonday. They mustered strong together, they kindled, they drew forth one another; they answered to the final roll-call on the victorious field of the Renaissance.

In England that movement knew no decay; as in Germany, it was merged in the religious question, and led straight on to the struggle for civic freedom. There was no stagnation, no rotting process. Far otherwise was it in France and Italy. The last Medici were corrupt despots, the last Valois corrupt madmen lapped in decadence; both were equally enmeshed in petty intrigue and incapable of larger statesmanship. Yet in each nation the

Renaissance lived on, as youth lives on in each of us—to refresh our ageing spirits, to remind, to urge, to inspire. The Renaissance was the wellhead of revival; at that source we can still drink to-day.

BOOKS RECOMMENDED

Note.—All books that have been translated are marked with an asterisk, or called by their English titles. Works cited in text, or referred to below for general purposes, are not cited again unless for a special reason.

For an introductory survey of the subject in its general bearings read—

The Renaissance in Italy: Symonds; *The Cambridge Modern History, I. Renaissance; Renaissance und Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland:* Geiger; *Histoire Universelle:* Lavisse et Rambaud; *History of the Papacy:* Creighton; *Geschichte der Päpste:* Pastor; *Femmes de la Renaissance:* Maulde de la Clavière.

For an introductory survey of the scholarly and artistic life of the time—

Life and Letters of Erasmus: Froude; *Historical Lectures and Addresses:* Creighton; *Italian Painters* and *Early Flemish Painters:* Crowe and Calvacaselle; *Florentine Sculptors of the Renaissance:* Wilhelm Bode.

For more detailed study of the subject—

MODERN WORKS (Historical)—

*Florence:** Villari; *Geschichte der Päpste,** Vols. VII and VIII: Pastor; *Geschichte der Päpste:** Ranke; *Kultur der Renaissance in Italien:** Burckhardt; *La Diplomatie Vénitienne:* Baschet; *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgange,* Vols. I–IV: Janssen.* *Die Wiederbelebung des Classischen Alterthums oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus:* Voight.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND LITERARY—

Lives of *Lorenzo de' Medici:* Armstrong, Horseburgh, von Reumont,* Roscoe; *Niccolo Macchiavelli:* Villari;* *Beatrice d'Este, Isabella d'Este* and *Baldassare Castiglione:* Julia Cartwright; *Life and Pontificate of Leo X,* and *Vittoria Colonna:* Mrs. Roscoe; *Lucrezia Borgia:** Gregorovius; *César Borgia:* Gastine; *Giordano Bruno:* Frith; *The Renaissance:* Walter Pater.

CONTEMPORARY (Manners and Morals)—

Burchardus Diarium (Vol. I, translated); *Il Cortegiano:* Castiglione (Florence, 1908), translated by Sir Thomas Hoby into contemporary English: Introduction by Walter Raleigh; *Il Principe,* edited by L. A. Burd; *Vite di Uomine illustri del Secolo XV:* Vespasiano da Bisticci; *Lives of the most eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects:* Vasari (Bohn); *Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini* (Dent). Both invaluable for atmosphere, not for accuracy.

For contemporary thought on art, science, religion—

Literary works: Leonardo da Vinci (Richter, 1883); *Notebooks:* Leonardo da Vinci (McCurdy, 1906).

For the art of the Renaissance—

Bryan's *Dictionary of Painters; A History of Painting in Italy:* Crowe and Calvacaselle; *Italian Art:* Julia Cartwright (useful summary); *Tiziano, la sua vita e i suoi tempe:* Crowe and Calvacaselle; *Les Arts à la cour des Papes pendant le XV et le XVIieme siècle:* Emile Muntz; *Les Ducs de Bourgogne: Essai sur les lettres, les arts, etc., pendant le XVieme siècle:* Delaborde.

For more detailed criticism—

The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance, The Venetian Painters of the Renaissance, The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance: Berenson; *Donatello:* Lord Balcarres; the monographs on artists in the Knackfuss Series (Botticelli, Verocchio, Vinci, Michael Angelo, etc.); *Verocchio:* Crutwell; *Michael Angelo:* Grimm;* *Michael Angelo:* Holroyd; *Bellini:* Roger Fry (Artists Series); *Raphael:* Oppé.

GERMAN—

Albert Dürer: Sturge Moore; *Albrecht Dürer:* Ford Heath (Great Artists Series); *Altdorfer:* Sturge Moore (Artists Series); *Holbein:* Ford Madox Hueffer (Popular Library of Art); *Deutsche Plastik im Mittelalter:* Max Sauerlandt.

FRENCH—

The French Renaissance: Mrs. Pattison; *French Painting in the Sixteenth Century:* Dimier; *Life of Philibert de l'Orme:* Vachon. Articles on Philibert de l'Orme: Reginald Blomfield in *Architectural Review*, February and March, 1904; *Les Œuvres de Palissy* (Preface by Anatole France).

GERMANY (General)—

Renaissance und Humanismus in Deutschland: Geiger, Berlin, 1882; *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes seit dem Ausgange*, Vols. I–IV: Janssen;* *Works of Erasmus; Life and Letters of Erasmus:* Froude.

FRANCE (Modern Historical)—

Histoire de France, Vols. IX and X: Michelet; *Histoire de France*, Vols. VIII and IX: Martin; *François I:* Paulin, Paris. (Contemporary records): *Rélations des Ambassadeurs Vénitiens sur les affaires de France au XVIieme siecle:* Tomasso, 1838; *La Diplomatie Vénitienne:* Baschet (dispatches from Venice to France); *Œuvres de Brantôme*, Vols. VII and IX; Lalanne; Diaries and Memoirs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the series of Memoirs (Petitot), and of the Société historique de France, especially the *Journals d'un bourgeois de Paris* (in both series) and the *Journal de Pierre l'Étoille* (in latter series); *Mémoires de Marguerite de Valois:* Caboche.

(Literary)—

Tableau du XVIieme siècle: Ste. Beuve; *Études littéraires:* Brunetière; *Histoire de la Littérature française:* René Doumic.

ENGLAND—

Cambridge Modern History, I.; *History of England:* Froude; *Short History of the English People:* Green; *The Italian Renaissance in England:* Einstein; *Queen Elizabeth:* Creighton; *The Courtships of Queen Elizabeth:* Hume; *English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century:* Froude; *Principal Navigators:* Hakluyt; *Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century:* Sydney Lee; *Letters and Life of Francis Bacon:* Spedding; *Bacon:* Church; *Old English Dramatists:* Lowell; *Renaissance Architecture in England:* Blomfield; *Apologie for Poetry:* Sidney; *Treasury of English Literature:* Hadow.

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